

# Riddle In Hinduism

---

## Contents

### **PART I - RELIGIOUS**

[Riddle No. 1 : The difficulty of knowing why one is a Hindu](#)

[Riddle No. 2 : The Origin Of The Vedas—The Brahminic Explanation or An Exercise In The Art Of Circumlocution](#)

[Riddle No. 3 : The Testimony Of Other Shastras On The Origin Of The Vedas](#)

[Riddle no. 4 : Why suddenly the brahmins declare the vedas to be infallible and not to be questioned?](#)

[Riddle no. 5 : Why did the brahmins go further and declare that the vedas are neither made by man nor by god?](#)

[Riddle no. 6 : The contents of the vedas: have they any moral or spiritual value?](#)

[Riddle no. 7 : The turn of the tide or how did the brahmins deaceare the vedas to be lower than the lowest of their shastras?](#)

[Riddle no. 8 : How the upanishads declared war on the vedas?](#)

[Riddle no. 9 : How the upanishads came to be made subordinate to the vedas?](#)

[Riddle no. 10 : Why did the brahmins make the hindu gods fight against one another?](#)

[Riddle no. 11 : Why did the brahmins make the hindu gods suffer to rise and fall?](#)

[Riddle no. 12 : Why did the brahmins dethrone the gods and enthrone the goddesses?](#)

[Riddle no. 13 : The riddle of the ahimsa](#)

[Riddle no. 14 : From ahimsa back to himsa](#)

[Riddle no. 15 : How did the brahmins wed an ahimsak god to a bloodthirsty Goddess?](#)

### **APPENDIX**

#### **PART II - SOCIAL**

#### **PART III - POLITICAL**

### **RIDDLE No. 1**

#### **THE DIFFICULTY OF KNOWING WHY ONE IS A HINDU**

India is a congeries of communities. There are in it Parsis, Christians, Mohammedans and Hindus. The basis of these communities is not racial. It is

of course religious. This is a superficial view. What is interesting to know is why is a Parsi a Parsi and why is a Christian a Christian, why is a Muslim a Muslim and why is a Hindu a Hindu? With regard to the Parsi, the Christian and the Muslim it is smooth sailing. Ask a Parsi why he calls himself a Parsi he will have no difficulty in answering the question. He will say he is a Parsi because he is a follower of Zoraster. Ask the same question to a Christian. He too will have no difficulty in answering the question. He is a Christian because he believes in Jesus Christ. Put the same question to a Muslim. He too will have no hesitation in answering it. He will say he is a believer in Islam and that is why he is a Muslim.

Now ask the same question to a Hindu and there is no doubt that he will be completely bewildered and would not know what to say.

If he says that he is a Hindu because he worships the same God as the Hindu Community does his answer cannot be true. All Hindus do not worship one God. Some Hindus are monotheists, some are polytheists and some are pantheists. Even those Hindus who are monotheists are not worshippers of the same Gods. Some worship the God Vishnu, some Shiva, some Rama, some Krishna. Some do not worship the male Gods. They worship a goddess. Even then they do not worship the same Goddesses. They worship different Goddesses. Some worship Kali, some worship Parvati, some worship Laxmi.

Coming to the Polytheists they worship all the Gods. They will worship Vishnu and Shiva, also Rama and Krishna. They will worship Kali, Parvati and Laxmi. A Hindu will fast on the Shivaratri day because it is sacred to Shiva. He will fast on Ekadashi day because it is sacred to Vishnu. He will plant a Bel tree because it is sacred to Shiva and he will plant a Tulsi because it is dear to Vishnu.

Polytheists among the Hindus do not confine their homage to the Hindu Gods. No Hindu hesitates to worship a Muslim Pir or a Christian Goddess. Thousands of Hindus go to a Muslim Pir and make offerings. Actually there are in some places Brahmins who own the office of a hereditary priesthood of a Muslim Pir and wear a Muslim Pir's dress. Thousands of Hindus go to make offerings to the Christian Goddess Mant Mauli near Bombay.

The worship of the Christian or Muslim Gods is only on occasions. But there are more permanent transfer of religious allegiance. There are many so-called Hindus whose religion has a strong Muhammadan content. Notable amongst these are the followers of the strange Panchpiriya cult, who worship five Muhammadan saints, of uncertain name and identity, and sacrifice cocks to them, employing for the purpose as their priest a Muhammadan Dafali fakir. Throughout India many Hindus make pilgrimages to Muhammadan

shrines, such as that of Sakhi Sarwar in the Punjab.

Speaking of the Malkanas Mr. Blunt says that they are converted Hindus of various castes belonging to Agra and the adjoining districts. chiefly Muttra, Ettah and Mainpuri. They are of Rajput, Jat and Bania descent. They are reluctant to describe themselves as Musalmans, and generally give their original caste name and scarcely recognize the name Malkana. Their names are Hindu; they mostly worship in Hindu temples: they use the salutation Ram-Ram: they intermarry amongst themselves only. On the other hand, they sometimes frequent a mosque, practise circumcision and bury their dead: they will eat with Muhammadans if they are particular friends.

In Gujarat there are several similar communities such as the Matia Kunbis, who call in Brahmans for their chief ceremonies, but are followers of the Pirana saint Imam Shah and his successors, and bury their dead as do the Muhammadans: the Sheikhas at their weddings employ both Hindu and a Muhammadan priest, and the Momans who practise circumcision, bury their dead and read the Gujarati Koran, but in other respects follow Hindu custom and ceremonial.

If he says that "I am a Hindu because I hold to the beliefs of the Hindus" his answer cannot be right for here one is confronted with the fact that Hinduism has no definite creed. The beliefs of persons who are by all admitted to be Hindus often differ more widely from each other than do those of Christians and Muhammadans. Limiting the issue to cardinal beliefs the Hindus differ among themselves as to the beliefs which are of cardinal importance. Some say that all the Hindu scriptures must be accepted, but some would exclude the Tantras, while others would regard only the Vedas as of primary importance; some again think that the sole essential is belief in the doctrine of karma and metempsychosis.

A complex congeries of creeds and doctrines is Hinduism. It shelters within its portals monotheists, polytheists and pantheists; worshippers of the great Gods Shiva and Vishnu or of their female counterparts, as well as worshippers of the divine mothers or the spirits of trees, rocks and streams and the tutelary village deities; persons who propitiate their deity by all manner of bloody sacrifices, and persons who will not only kill no living creature but who must not even use the word 'cut'; those whose ritual consists mainly of prayers and hymns, and those who indulge in unspeakable orgies in the name of religion; and a host of more or less heterodox sectaries, many of whom deny the supremacy of the Brahmans, or at least have non-Brahmanical religious leaders.

If he says that he is a Hindu because he observes the same customs as other Hindus do his answer cannot be true. For all Hindus do not observe the

same customs.

In the north near relatives are forbidden to marry; but in the south cousin marriage is prescribed, and even closer alliances are sometimes permitted. As a rule female chastity is highly valued, but some communities set little store by it, at any rate prior to marriage, and others make it a rule to dedicate one daughter to a life of religious prostitution. In some parts the women move about freely; in others they are kept secluded. In some parts they wear skirts; in others trousers.

Again if he said that he is a Hindu because he believes in the caste system his answer cannot be accepted as satisfactory. It is quite true that no Hindu is interested in what his neighbour believes, but he is very much interested in knowing whether he can eat with him or take water from his hands. In other words it means that the caste system is an essential feature of Hinduism and a man who does not belong to a recognized Hindu Caste cannot be a Hindu. While all this is *true* it must not be forgotten that observance of caste is not enough. Many Musalmans and many Christians observe caste if not in the matter of inter-dining certainly in the matter of inter-marriage. But they cannot be called Hindus on that account. Both elements must be present. He must be a Hindu and he must also observe caste. This brings us back to the old question who is a Hindu? It leaves us where we are.

Is it not a question for every Hindu to consider why in the matter of his own religion his position is so embarrassing and so puzzling? Why is he not able to answer so simple a question which every Parsi, every Christian, and every Muslim can answer? Is it not time that he should ask himself what are the causes that has brought about this Religious chaos ?

## RIDDLE No. 2

### THE ORIGIN OF THE VEDAS— THE BRAHMINIC EXPLANATION OR AN EXERCISE IN THE ART OF CIRCUMLOCUTION

There is hardly any Hindu who does not regard the Vedas as the most sacred Book of his religion. And yet ask any Hindu what is the origin of the Vedas and it would be difficult to find one who can give a clear and a definite answer to the simple question. Of course, if the question was addressed to a Vedic Brahmin he would say that the Vedas are Sanatan. But this is no answer to the question. For first of all what does the word *Sanatan* means?

The best explanation of the word *Sanatan* is to be found in the Commentary by Kalluka Bhatt on Chapter I Shiokas 22-23 of the Manu Smriti. This is what Kulluka Bhatt defines the word Sanatan\*.

*We have found 72 pages dealing with the subject " Origin of the Vedas ".*

*These pages were neither arranged properly nor paged either by the typist or by the author. We have attempted to organize and arrange all these loose papers systematically and divide them into the Riddle No, 2 to 6, in accordance with the arrangement given in the Table of contents. It is difficult to assume that all these pages are complete in the treatment of the subject of each Chapter.*

*(There is, however, one independent chapter containing 61 pages under the title 'Riddle of the Vedas' placed as Appendix I. That essay deals with all the subjects mentioned in the Table of Contents at Sr. No. 2 to 6 in a consolidated manner. Several paras may be found repeated in that essay. The original MS of the chapters 2 to 6 included here hears corrections and modifications in the handwriting of the author, whereas the Chapter included as Appendix I is a typed second copy having no corrections at all. We have followed the chronology of the Table of contents and the pages of corrected MS are arranged accordingly.)*

"The word Sanatana he says, means 'eternally pre-existing'. The doctrine of the superhuman origin of the Vedas is maintained by Manu. The same Vedas which (existed) in the previous mundane era (Kalpa) were preserved in the memory of the omniscient Brahma, who was one with the supreme spirit. It was those same Vedas that, in the beginning of the present Kalpa, he drew forth from Agni, Vayu and Surya; and this dogma, which is founded upon the Veda, is not to be questioned, for the Veda says, 'the Rig-Veda comes from Agni, the Yajur-Veda from Vayu, and the Sama-Veda from Surya. " To understand the explanation by *Kulluka Bhatt* it is necessary to explain what Kalpa means.

A Kalpa is a reckoning of time adopted by the Vedic Brahmins. The Brahmanic reckoning of time divides time into (1) Varsha, (2) Yuga, (3) Mahayuga, (4) Manvantara and (5) Kalpa.

Varsha is easy enough to understand. It corresponds to the term year.

What exactly the period of time covered by the term Yuga covers there is no unanimity.

A Mahayuga is a period covered by a group of four Yugas: (1) Krita Yuga, (2) Treta Yuga, (3) Dwapar Yuga and (4) Kali Yuga. The four Yugas follow one another in a cycle, when the period of the first Yuga is spent it is followed by the second and so on in the order given. When the cycle is complete one Mahayuga is completed and a new Mahayuga opens. Every Mahayuga begins with the Krita Yuga and ends with Kali Yuga.

There is no uncertainty as to the time relation of a Mahayuga and a Kalpa. 71 Mahayugas make one Kalpa. There is however some uncertainty as to the time relation between Mahayuga and Manvantara. A Manvantara is equal to

71 Mahayugas "and something more". What exact period of time that 'something more' means, the Brahmins have not been able to state categorically. Consequently the time relation between Manvantara and Kalpa is uncertain.

But this does not matter very much for our present purposes. For the present it is enough to confine our attention to Kalpa.

The idea underlying ' Kalpa ' is closely connected with the creation and dissolution of the Universe. The creation of the world is called *Srashti*. The dissolution of the universe is called *Pralaya*. Time between *Srashti and Pralaya* is called *Kalpa*. The idea of the origin of the Vedas is thus more intimately connected with the idea of Kalpa.

According to this scheme of things, what is supposed to happen is that when a *Kalpa* begins creation begins. With the beginning of the creation there comes into being a new series of Vedas. What Kulluka Bhatt wants to convey is that though in a sense every new Kalpa has a new series of Vedas the same old Vedas are reproduced by Brahma from his memory. That is why he says the Vedas are Sanatan i.e., eternally pre-existing.

What Kalluka Bhatt says is that the Vedas are reproduced from memory. The real question is who made them and not who reproduced them. Even if one accepts the theory of reproduction at the beginning of each Kalpa the question still remains who made the Vedas when the First Kalpa began. The Vedas could not have come into being *ex-nihilo*. They must have a beginning though they may have no end. Why don't the Brahmins say openly? Why this circumlocution?

### RIDDLE NO. 3

#### THE TESTIMONY OF OTHER SHASTRAS ON THE ORIGIN OF THE VEDAS

##### I

The search for the origin of the Vedas may well begin with the Vedas themselves.

The Rig-Veda propounds a theory of the origin of the Vedas. It is set out in the famous Purusha Sukta. According to it, there was a mystic sacrifice of the Purusha a mythical being and it is out of this sacrifice that the three Vedas namely. Rig, Sama, Yajus came into being.

The Sama-Veda and Yajur-Veda have nothing to say about the origin of the Vedas.

The only other Veda that refers to this question is the Atharva-Veda. It has many explanations regarding the origin of the Vedas. One explanation\* reads as follows:

" From Time the Rig verses sprang; the Yajus sprang from Time. " There are also two other views propounded in the Atharva-Veda on this subject. The first of these is not very intelligent and may be given in its own language which runs as follows:

" Declare who that Skamba (supporting principle) is in whom the primeval rishis, the rick, saman, and yajush, the earth and the one rishi, are sustained....

" Declare who is that Skamba from whom they cut off the rick verses, from whom they scrapped off the yajush, of whom the saman verses are the hairs and the verses of Atharvan and Angiras the mouth. "

Obviously this statement is a challenge to some one who had proclaimed that the Rig, Sama and Yajur Veda were born out of a Skamba.

The second explanation given in the Atharva-Veda is that the Vedas sprang from Indra.

## II

This is all that the Vedas have to say about their own origin. Next in order of the Vedas come the Brahmanas. We must therefore inquire into what they have to say on this subject. The only Brahmanas which attempt to explain the origin of the Vedas are the Satapatha Brahmana, the Taitteriya Brahmana. Aitereya Brahmana and Kaushitaki Brahmana.

The Satapatha Brahmana has a variety of explanations. One attributes the origin of the Vedas to Prajapati. According to it:

" Prajapati, was formerly this universe (i.e., the sole existence) one only. He desired, 'may I become, may I be propagated '. He toiled in devotion, he performed austerity.

" From him, when he had so toiled and performed austerity, three worlds were created—earth, air and sky. He infused warmth into these three worlds. From them, thus heated, three lights were produced,— Agni (fire), this which purifies i.e., Pavana, or Vayu, (the Wind), and Surya (the Sun). He infused heat into these three lights. From them so heated the three Vedas were produced,— the Rig-Veda from Agni (fire), the Yajur-Veda from Vayu (Wind) and the Sama-Veda from Surya (the Sun). He infused warmth into these three Vedas. From them so heated three luminous essences were produced, *bhuh*, from the Rig-Veda, *bhuvah* from the Yajur-Veda, and *sva* from the Sama-Veda. Hence, with the Rig-Veda, the office of the *adhvaryu*; with the Sama-Veda, the duty of the *udgatri*; while the function of the brahman arose through the luminous essence of the triple science (i.e., the three Vedas combined)."

The Satapatha Brahmana gives another variant of this explanation of the origin of the Veda from Prajapati. The explanation is that Prajapati created the

Vedas from waters. Says the Satapatha Brahmana:

"This male, Prajapati, desired, 'May I multiply, may I be propagated'. He toiled in devotion; he practised austere-fervour. Having done so he first of all created sacred knowledge, the triple Vedic science. This became a basis for him. Wherefore men say, 'sacred knowledge is the basis of this universe'. Hence after studying the Veda a man has a standing ground; for sacred knowledge is his foundation. Resting on this basis he (Prajapati) practised austere-fervour. He created the waters from Vach (speech) as their world. Vach was his; she was created. As she pervaded (apnot) waters were called 'apah'. As she covered (avrinot) all, water was called 'Var'. He desired, 'May I be propagated from these waters'. Along with this triple Vedic science he entered the waters. Thence sprang an egg. He gave it an impulse; and said 'let there be, let there be, let there be again'. Thence was first created sacred knowledge, the triple Vedic science. Wherefore men say, 'Sacred knowledge is the first-born thing' in this universe. Moreover, it was sacred knowledge which was created from that Male in front, wherefore it was created as his mouth. Hence they say of a man learned in the Veda, 'he is like Agni; for the sacred knowledge is Agni's mouth'."

There is a third explanation given in the Satapatha Brahmana:

"I settle thee in the ocean as they seat."

"Mind is the ocean. From the mind-ocean with speech for a shovel the Gods dug out the triple Vedic science. Hence this verse has been uttered; 'May the brilliant deity today know where they placed that offering which the Gods dug out with sharp shovels. Mind is the ocean; speech is the sharp shovel; the triple Vedic Science is the offering. In reference to this the verse has been uttered. He settles it in Mind."

The Taittiriya - Brahmana has three explanations to offer. It speaks of the Vedas as being derived from Prajapati. It also says Prajapati created king Soma and after him the three Vedas were created. This Brahmana has another explanation quite unconnected with Prajapati. According to it:

"Vach (speech) is an imperishable thing, and the first-born of the ceremonial, the mother of the Vedas, and the centre-point of immortality. Delighting in us, she came to the sacrifice. May the protecting goddess be ready to listen to my invocation, she whom the wise rishis, the composers of hymns, the Gods sought by austere-fervour, and by laborious devotion." To crown all this the Taittiriya Brahmana offers a third explanation. It says that the Vedas came from the beard of Prajapati.

### III

The Upanishads have also attempted to explain the origin of the Vedas. The explanation offered by the Chhandogya Upanishad is the same as that given



by the Satapatha Brahmana—namely that the Rig-Veda originated from Agni, Yajus from Vayu and Sam from the Sun.

The Brahad Aranyaka Upanishad has two explanations to offer. In one place, it says:

"As from a fire made of moist wood, various modifications of smoke proceed, so is the breathing of this great Being the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda, the Atharvangirases, the Itihasas, Puranas, science, the Upanishads, verses (slokas), aphorisms, comments of different kinds—all these are his breathings. " In another place, it says

" Prajapati (identified with Death or the Devourer) is said to have produced Vach (speech), and through her, together with soul, to have created all things, including the Vedas."

"By that speech and that soul he created all things whatsoever, rick, yajush, and saman texts, metres, sacrifices, creatures and animals. "

"The three Vedas are (identifiable with) these three things (speech, mind and breath). Speech is the Rig-Veda, mind the Yajur-Veda and breath the Sama-Veda."

#### IV

Coming to the Smritis, there are two theories as to the origin of the Vedas to be found in the Manu Smriti. In one place, it is said that the Vedas were created by Brahma.

"He (Brahma) in the beginning fashioned from the words of the Veda the several names, functions, and separate conditions of all (creatures). That Lord also created the subtle host of active and living deities, and of Sadhyas, and eternal sacrifice. And in order to the performance of sacrifice, he drew forth from Agni, from Vayu and from Surya, the triple eternal Veda, distinguished as Rick, Yajush and Saman."

In another place he seems to accept the story of Prajapati being the originator of the Vedas as would be evident from the following:

"Prajapati also milked out of the three Vedas the letters, 'a', 'u', and 'm' together with the words 'bhuh', 'bhuvah' and 'svar'. The same supreme Prajapati also milked from each of the three Vedas one of the three portions of the text called Savitri (or gayatri), beginning with the word *tat*... . The three great imperishable particles (bhuh, bhuvah, svar) preceded by om, and the gayatri of three lines, are to be regarded as the mouth of Brahma."

#### V

It is also interesting to note what the Puranas have to say about the origin of

the Vedas. The Vishnu Purana says:

" From his eastern mouth Brahma formed the gayatra, the rick verses, the trivrit, the soma-rathantara, and of sacrifices, the agnishtoma. From his southern mouth he created the yajush verses, the trishtubh metre, the panchadasa-stoma, the vrihat-saman and the ukthya. From his western mouth he formed the saman verses, the jagatimetre, the saptadasa-stoma, the vairupa, and the atiratra. From his northern mouth he framed the ekavinsa, the atharvan, the aptoryaman, with the anushtubh and biraj metres.

" The Bhagvat Puranasays:

"Once the Vedas sprang from the four-faced creator, as he was meditating ' how shall I create the aggregate worlds as before? . . He formed from his eastern and other mouths the Vedas called rick, yajush, saman, and atharvan, together with praise, sacrifice, hymns and expiation. " *\*[There appears to be some quotations missing as there is no link between these two paragraphs.]*

" Entering between her eyes. From her there was then produced a quadruple being in the form of a Male, lustrous as Brahma, undefined, eternal, undecaying, devoid of bodily senses or qualities, distinguished by the attribute of brilliancy, pure as the rays of the moon, radiant, and embodied in letters. The God fashioned the Rig-Veda, with the Yajush from his eyes, the Sama-Veda from the tip of his tongue, and the Atharvan from his head. These Vedas, as soon as they are born, find a body, (kshetra). Hence they obtain their character of Vedas, because they find (vindanti) that abode. These Vedas then create the pre-existent eternal Brahma (sacred science), a Male of celestial form, with their own mind-born qualities. "

It also accepts Prajapati as the origin. It says that when the Supreme being was intent on creating the Universe, Hiranyagarbha, or Prajapati, issued from his mouth the sound ' Om ', and was desired to divide himself—a process which he was in great doubt how he should effect—the Harivamsa proceeds:

" While he was thus reflecting, the sound ' om ' issued from him, and resounded through the earth, air and sky. While the God of Gods was again and again repeating this, the essence of mind, the vashatkara proceeded from his heart. Next, the sacred and transcendent vyahritis, (bhuh, bhuvah, svar), formed of the great smriti, in the form of sound, were produced from earth, air, and sky. Then appeared the goddess, the most excellent of meters, with twenty-four syllables (the gayatri). Reflecting on the divine text (beginning with) 'tat', the Lord formed the Savitri. He then produced all the Vedas, the Rick, Saman, Atharvan, and Yajush, with their prayers and rites."

## VI

Here we have eleven different explanations regarding the origin of the

Vedas—(1) as originating from the mystical sacrifice of Purusha, (2) as resting on Skambha, (3) as cut or scraped off from him, as being his hair and his mouth, (4) as springing from Indra, (5) as produced from Time, (6) as produced from Agni, Vayu and Surya, (7) as springing from Prajapati, and the Waters, (8) as being the breath of Brahma, (9) as being dug by the Gods out of mind-ocean, (10) as being the hair of Prajapati's beard and (II) as being the offspring of Vach.

This bewildering multiplicity of answers to a simple question is a riddle. The writers who have come forward to furnish these answers are all Brahmins. They belong to the same Vaidik school of thought. They alone were the guardians of the ancient religious lore. Why should they have given such incoherent and chaotic answers to a very simple question?

#### RIDDLE No. 4

#### WHY SUDDENLY THE BRAHMINS DECLARE THE VEDAS TO BE INFALLIBLE AND NOT TO BE QUESTIONED?

To say that the Vedas occupy a very high position in the Religious literature of the Hindus is to make an understatement. To say that the Vedas form the sacred literature of the Hindus will also be an inadequate statement. For the Vedas besides being a sacred literature of the Hindus is a book whose authority cannot be questioned. The Vedas are infallible. Any argument based on the Vedas is final and conclusive. There is no appeal against it. This is the theory of the Vedic Brahmins and is accepted by the generality of the Hindus.

#### I

On what does this theory rest? The theory rests on the view that the Vedas are *Apaurusheya*. When the Vedic Brahmins say that the Vedas are *Apaurusheya* what they mean is that they were not made by man. Not being made by man, they are free from the failings, faults and frailties to which every man is subject and are therefore infallible.

#### II

It is difficult to understand how such a theory came to be propounded by the Vedic Brahmins. For there was a time when the Vedic Brahmins themselves thought quite differently on the question of the authority of the Vedas as being final and conclusive. These *Vaidik* Brahmins are no other than the authors of the various Dharma Sutras.

The following are the views expressed by the Dharma Sutras on question of the authority of the Vedas: To begin with the Gautama Dharma Sutra. It lays down the following rule on the question of the infallibility of the Vedas. "The Veda is the source of the sacred law" 1-1.

"And the tradition and practice of those who know the Veda" I-2. "

"If authorities of equal force are conflicting, (either may be followed at pleasure" I-4.

The Vashishta Dharma Sutra propounds the following view:

"The sacred law has been settled by the revealed texts i.e., Vedas and by the tradition of the sages" I-4.

" On the failure of (rules given in) these (two sources) the practice of Shishtas (has) authority" I-5.

The views of Baudhayana are given below:

Prasna I, Adhyaya I, Kandika I.

(1) The sacred law is taught in each Veda.

(2) We will explain (it) in accordance with that.

(3) (The sacred law), taught in the tradition (Smriti) stands second.

(4) The practice of the Shishtas (stands) third.

(5) On failure of them an Assembly consisting at least of ten members (shall decide disputed points of law).

The view taken by the Apastamba Dharma Sutra is clear from the following extract from that Sutra:

"Now, therefore, we will declare the acts productive of merit which form part of the customs of daily life" 1-1.

"The authority (for these duties) is the agreement (samaya) of those who know the law". 1-2.

"And (the authorities for the latter are) the Vedas alone" 1-3. With regard to the *Shishtas* both the Vashishtha Dharma Sutra and also the Baudhayana Dharma Sutra have taken particular care to define who can be regarded as *Shishtas*.

The Vashishta Dharma Sutra says:

"He whose heart is free from desire (is called) a Shishta". I-6. Baudhayana goes into much greater details about the qualification of the Shishtas. This is what he says:

"5. Shishtas, forsooth, (are those) who are free from envy, free from pride, contented with a store of grain sufficient for ten days, free from covetousness, and free from hypocrisy, arrogance, greed, perplexity and anger."

" 6. Those are called Shishtas who, in accordance with the sacred law, have studied the Veda together with its appendages, know how to draw inferences from that (and) are able to adduce proofs perceptible by the senses from the revealed texts. "

Baudhayana has also something very interesting to say about the assembly whom he authorises to decide. The following are his views on the matter:

"8. Now they quote also (the following verses): 'Four men, who each know

one of the four Vedas, a Mimansaka, one who knows the Angas, one who recites (the works on) the sacred law, and three Brahmanas belonging to (three different) orders, constitute an assembly consisting at least of ten members. "

"9. There may be five, or there may be three, or there may be one blameless man, who decides (questions regarding) the sacred law. But a thousand fools (can) not do it). "

"As an elephant made of wood, as an antelope made of leather, such an unlearned Brahmana; those three having nothing but the name (of their kind)".

This review of Dharma Sutras' shows that the (1) Veda, (2) Tradition (Smriti), (3) Practice of Shishta and (4) Agreement in an assembly were the four different authorities which were required to be referred to in the decision of an issue which was in controversy. It also shows that there was a time when the Vedas were not the sole infallible authorities. That was the time represented by the Dharma Sutras of Vashishta and Baudhayana. Apastambha does not invest the Vedas with any authority at all. Knowledge of Vedas is made by him as an electoral qualification for membership of the Assembly whose agreed decision is the law and the only law. The Veda was not at all regarded as a book of authority and when the only recognized source of authority was an agreement arrived at in an Assembly of the learned. It is only in the time of Gautama that the Vedas came to be regarded as the only authority. There was a time when an agreed decision of the Assembly was admitted as one source of authority. That is the period represented by Baudhayana.

This conclusion is reinforced by the following quotation from the Satapatha Brahmana. It says:

*[Left incomplete. Quotation and further discussion not given.]*

#### RIDDLE No. 5

#### WHY DID THE BRAHMINS GO FURTHER AND DECLARE THAT THE VEDAS ARE NEITHER MADE BY MAN NOR BY GOD?

The Vedic Brahmins were not content with investing the Vedas with Infallibility. They went further and asserted that the Vedas were Apaurusheya. By this they meant the Vedas were not made by man. This doctrine no doubt leads to the doctrine of Infallibility. For not being made by man they are free from the failings, faults and frailties of man and are therefore infallible. All the same it is necessary to examine the theory separately for it is an independent theory.

Is there really no human author of the Vedas? Are they really Apaurusheya?

The best evidence on the subject is the evidence of the *Anukramanis*— a special class of literature which forms part of the ancient Sanskrit literature. What are called Anukramanis are nothing but systematic indices to various portions of the ancient Vedic literature. Every Veda has an Anukramani, sometimes have more than one Anukramani. Seven Anukramanis for the Rig-Veda are known to be in existence, five by Shaunaka, one by Katyayana and one by an unknown author. For the Yajur-Veda there exist three Anukramanis, one for each of the three Shakhas, Atreyi, Charayaniyas and Madhyandina. For the Sama-Veda there are two Anukramanis, one is called Arsheya-Brahmana and the other is known by the name Parishistas. As to the Atharva-Veda one Anukramani is known to exist. It is known as Brihat-Sarvanukramani.

The most perfect Anukramani according to Prof. Max Muller is Katyayana's Sarvanukramani to the Rig-Veda. Its importance lies in the fact that it gives (1) the first words of each hymn, (2) the number of verses. (3) the name and the family of the Rishi who composed it, (4) the names of the deities and (5) the metres of every verse. What emerges from a reference to the Sarvanukramani is that the Rishis are the authors of the hymns which make up the Rig-Veda. The Rig-Veda therefore on the evidence of the Anukramani cannot but be regarded as a man-made work. The same must be the conclusion regarding the other Vedas. That the Anukramanis are realistic is proved by many passages in the Rig-Veda in which the Rishis describe themselves as the composers of the hymns.

Below are given a few of such passages:

"The Kanvas make a prayer to you, hear well their invocation'. Thus, O, Indra, yoker of steeds, have the Gotamas made hymns for these efficaciously"

"This hymn has efficaciously been made to you, O opulent Asvins, by the Manas"

"These magnifying prayers, (this) hymn, O Asvins, the Gritsamadas have made for you "

"Aspiring to heaven, the sage Kusikas have made a hymn with praises to thee, O Indra. "

"Nodhas, descendant of Gotama, fashioned this new hymn for (thee). Indra, who are of old, and who yokest thy steeds"

"Thus O, hero, have the Gritsamadas, desiring succour, fashioned for thee a hymn as men make works. "

"The sages generated an efficacious production and a prayer for Indra."

"These hymns, Agni, generated for thee, celebrate thy bounty in cows and horses. "

"Our father hath discovered (or invented) this great, sevenheaded hymn, born of sacred truth; Ayasya, friend of all men celebrating Indra, has generated the fourth song of praise."

"We, the Raghuanas, have uttered to Agni honied speech; we incessantly laud him with eulogies. "

"Thus, all ye Adityas, Aditi, and ye ruling powers, has the wise son of Plati magnified you. The celestial race has been lauded by the immortal Gaya. "

" He it is whom they call a rishi, a priest, a pious sacrificer, a chanter of prayers, a reciter of hymns, he it is who knows the three bodies of the brilliant (Agni), the man who is most prominent in bestowing gifts. "

Apart from the evidence of the Anukramanis there is another sort of evidence which militates against the theory of the Vedas being Apaurusheya. The Rishis themselves have treated the Vedas as a human and as a historical product. The hymns of Rig-Veda distinguish between ancient and modern Rishis. Here are a few of them:

"Agni, who is worthy to be celebrated by former as well as modern rishis, will bring the gods hither. "

"The former rishis who invoked thee for succour. "

"Hear the hymn of me this modern sage, of this modern (sage). "

" Indra, as thou hast been like a joy to former worshippers who praised thee, like waters to the thirsty, I invoke thee again and again with this hymn. "

"The ancient rishis, resplendent and sage, have placed in front of them (Brihaspati) with gladdening tongue."

"Neither the ancients nor later men, nor any modern man, has attained to (conceived) thy prowess, O, Madhavan."

"As (Indra's) former worshippers were, (may we be) blameless, irreproachable, and unharmed."

"For, now, O energetic god, men are thy worshippers as the ancients born of old and the men of the middle and later ages have been thy friends. And O, much-invoked think of the most recent of all.

"To Him (Indra) our ancient fathers, the seven Navagava sages desiring food, (resorted) with their hymns. "

"Glorified by our newest hymn, do thou bring to us wealth and food with progeny."

A closer study of the Rig-Veda will show that the Rig-Veda itself makes a distinction between old hymns and new hymns. Some of them are given below:

"Glorified by our newest hymn, do thou bring to us wealth and food and progeny."

"Agni thou hast announced (or do thou announcest) among the gods this

our offering, our newest hymn."

"Through our new hymns, do thou, vigorous in action, destroyer of cities, sustain us with invigorating blessings. "

" I bring to Agni, the son of strength, a new and energetic hymn, a production of, thought uttered by the voice (vachah)."

" I present to the mighty protector a mental production, a new utterance (now) springing up"

"May the new prayer impel thee, the heroic well-accourted, the loud-thundering to succour us. "

" I seek like the ancients, to stimulate thee, the ancient, with a new hymn. "

"May the new hymns made to praise you, may these prayers gratify you."

" Sing O, Sobhari, with a new hymn to these youthful, vigorous, and brilliant (gods)

"Indra, slayer of Vritra, thunderer, invoked of many, we (thy) numerous (worshippers) bring to thee, as thy hire, hymns which never before existed. "

" I will address to this ancient (deity) my new praises which he desires: May he listen to us"

" Desiring horses, cattle, and wealth we invoke thee to approach us. "

Given this abundance of evidence to prove the human origin of the Vedas it is a riddle to find that the Brahmins should so strenuously propagate this extravagant view that the Vedas are not man made. What made the Brahmins propagate such a view?

Notwithstanding this there were eminent philosophers who were prepared to accept the authority of the Vedas although they were not prepared to admit that the Vedas were *Sanatan* or *Apaurush*.

The Gautama the founder of what is called the Nyaya system of Philosophy said:

"The authority of the Veda, like that of the formulas, and the Ayur-Veda (treatise on medicine) follows from the authority of the competent persons from whom they proceeded. Since the competent maker of the Veda possesses authority, inculcates truth, it results from the force of the terms that the Veda was uttered by a person of this character; and by this reasoning the authority of the Veda is to be inferred. He illustrates this by the case of the formulas and the Ayur-Veda. By formulas (*mantra*) are meant the sentences which neutralize poison etc., and the section containing the Ayur-Veda forms part of the Veda. Now as the authority of these two classes of writings is admitted by general consent, the authority of everything which possess the characteristics of the Veda must be inferred from this example. Some, however, explain the aphorism thus; a Veda is that in which authority is found or recognized. From such Vedicity (or Possession of the character of a Veda)



the authority of any work is to be inferred. "

The Vaishashika system admits that the Vedas are authoritative. But the grounds on which it rests its conclusion are:

- (1) That the Vedas are the product of an intelligent mind and
- (2) That they have been uttered by God. Therefore they are authoritative.

The Sankhya system founded by Kapila held the view that eternity cannot be predicated of the Vedas, since various texts in the Vedas themselves declare them to have been produced. It expressly denies that the Vedas originated from the conscious effort of any divine being. According to the Sankhya, the Vedas like the Sun shine by their own light, and evince an inherent power both of revealing their own perfection and of elucidating all other things, past and future, great and small, near and remote. The system of Philosophy known as the

Vedanta seems to support two distant views. It ascribes the origin of the Vedas to Brahma as its source or cause of source using the term Brahma as neuter denoting the supreme spirit and not as masculine designating the personal creator. It also speaks of the eternity of the Vedas and makes mention of a self-dependent author.

The Brahmins did not remain content with the argument that the Vedas were not made by man. They went much further and contended that the Vedas were not made even by God. This theory is propounded by Jaimini the author of the *Purva Mimansa*. Jaimini's arguments in favour of the thesis are so strange that one has to know them in order to realize their strangeness.

It is in the *Purva Mimansa*— a book of Brahmanic philosophy— that this doctrine of the Vedas being *Apaurusheya* is propounded. The following extracts from the book will reveal the nature of the argument.

Jaimini the author of the *Purva Mimansa* first deals with the argument of the *Naiyayikas* who assert that the Vedas are made by *Parameshwara* and states the case made out by the *Naiyayikas*.

The argument of the *Mimansakas* is:

"The Veda could not have been uttered by the incorporeal *Paramesvara* (God), who has no palate or other organs of speech, and therefore cannot be conceived to have pronounced the letters (of which it is composed.). This objection (answers the *Naiyayika*) is not happy, because, though *Paramesvara* is by nature incorporeal, he can yet, by way of sport assume a body, in order to show kindness to his devoted worshippers. Consequently, the arguments in favour of the doctrine that the Veda had no personal author are inconclusive."

He then proceeds to state his arguments in favour of the Doctrine of the *Mimansakas*—

" I shall now clear up all these difficulties. What is meant by this *paurusheyatva* ('derivation from a personal author') which it is sought to prove? Is it (1) mere procession (*utpannatva*) from a person (purusha) like the procession of the Veda from persons such as ourselves, when we daily utter it? or (2) is it the arrangement— with a view to its manifestation—of knowledge acquired by other modes of proof, in the sense in which persons like ourselves compose a treatise? If the first meaning be intended, there will be no dispute.

If the second sense be meant, I ask whether the Veda is proved (to be authoritative) in virtue (a) of its being founded on inference, or (b) of its being founded on supernatural information (*agama-halat*)? . .

The former alternative (a) i.e., that the Veda derives its authority from being founded on inference cannot be correct, since this theory breaks down, if it be applied to the sentence of the Malati Madhava or any other secular poem (which may contain inferences destitute of authority). If, on the other hand, you say (b) that the contents of the Veda are distinguished from those of other books of having authority, this explanation also will fail to satisfy a philosopher. For the word of the Veda is (defined to be) a word which proves things that are not provable by any other evidence.

Now if it could be established that this Vedic word did nothing more than prove things that are provable by other evidence, we should be involved in the same sort of contradiction as if a man were to say that his mother was a barren woman.

And even if we conceded that Parameswara might in sport assume a body, it would not be conceivable that in that case he should perceive things beyond the reach of the senses, from the want of any means of apprehending objects removed from him in place, in time, and in nature. Nor is it to be thought that his eyes and other sense alone would have the power of producing such knowledge, since men can only attain to conceptions corresponding with what they have perceived.

This is what has been said by the Guru (Prabhakara) when he refutes this supposition of an omniscient author; 'Wherever any object is perceived (by the organ of sight) in its most perfect exercise, such perception can only have reference to the vision of something very distant or very minute, since no organ can go beyond its own proper objects, as e.g., the ear can never become cognizant of form '.

Hence the authority of the Veda does not arise in virtue of any supernatural information acquired by the Deity in a corporeal shape." These are arguments urged by Jaimini to destroy the case of the Naiyayikas. Jaimini then proceeds to give his positive arguments to show why the Vedas are not the word of

God but something superior to that. This is what he says:

" In the preceding aphorism it was declared that the connection of words and their meanings is eternal. Desiring now to prove that this (eternity of connection) is dependent on the eternity of words (or sound), he begins by setting forth the first side of the question, viz., the doctrine of those who maintain that sound is not eternal."

"Some, i.e., the followers of the Nyaya philosophy, say that sound is a product, because we see that it is the result of effort, which it would not be if it were eternal."

"That it is not eternal, on account of its transitoriness, i.e., because after a moment it ceases to be perceived."

"Because, we employ in reference to it the expression 'making' i.e., we speak of 'making' a sound."

" Because it is perceived by different persons at once, and is consequently in immediate contact with the organs of sense of those, both far and near, which it could not be if it were one and eternal."

" Because sounds have both an original and a modified form; as e.g., in the case of *dadhi atra*, which is changed into *dadhy atra*, the original letter 'i' being altered into 'y' by the rules of permutation. Now, no substance which undergoes a change is eternal."

" Because sound is augmented by the number of those who make it. Consequently the opinion of the Mimansaka, who say that sound is merely manifested, and not created, by human effort, is wrong; since even a thousand manifesters do not increase the object which they manifest, as a jar is not made larger by a thousand lamps." These objections against the Mimansaka theory that sound is manifested, and not created, by those who utter it, are now answered by Jaimini. Says Jaimini:

"But, according to both schools, viz., that which holds sound to be created, and that which regards it as merely manifested, the perception of it is alike momentary. But of these two views, the theory of manifestation is shown in the next aphorism to be the correct one."

"The non-perception at any particular time, of sound, which, in reality, perpetually exists, arises from the fact that the utterer of sound has not come into contact with his object i.e., sound. Sound is eternal, because we recognize the letter 'k', for instance, to be the same sound which we have always heard, and because it is the simplest method of accounting for the phenomenon to suppose that it is the same. The still atmosphere which interferes with the perception of sound is removed by the conjunctions and disjunctions of air issuing from a speaker's mouth, and thus sound (which always exists, though unperceived) becomes perceptible. This is the reply to

the objection of its 'transitoriness'.

"The word, 'making' sounds, merely means employing or uttering them."

"One sound is simultaneously heard by different persons, just as one Sun is seen by them at one and the same time. Sound like the Sun, is a vast, and not a minute object, and thus may be perceptible by different persons, though remote from one another."

"The letter 'y', which is substituted for 'i' in the instance referred to under Sutra 10, is not a modification of 'i', but a distinct letter. Consequently, sound is not modified."

" It is an increase of 'noise ', not of sound, that is occasioned by a multitude of speakers. The word ' noise ' refers to the 'conjunctions ' and 'disjunctions' of the air which enter simultaneously into the hearer's ear from different quarters; and it is of these that an increase takes place."

" Sound must be eternal, because its utterance is fitted to convey a meaning to other persons. If it were not eternal (or abiding), it would not continue till the hearer had learned its sense, and thus he would not learn the sense, because the cause had ceased to exist."

" Sound is eternal, because it is in every case correctly and uniformly recognised by many persons simultaneously; and it is inconceivable that they should all at once fall into a mistake."

" When the word 'go ' (cow) has been repeated ten times, the hearers will say that the word 'go" has been ten times pronounced, not that ten words having the sound of 'go' have been uttered; and this fact also is adduced as a proof of the eternity of sound.

" Sound is eternal, because we have no ground for anticipating its destruction.

" But it may be urged that sound is a modification of air, since it arises from its conjunctions, and because the Siksha (or Vedanga treating of pronunciation) says that 'air arrives at the condition of sound' and as it is thus produced from air, it cannot be eternal." A reply to this difficulty is given in Sutra 22. " Sound is not a modification of air, because if it were, the organ of hearing would have no appropriate object which it could perceive. No modification of air (help by the Naiyayikas to be tangible) could be perceived by the organ of hearing, which deals only with intangible sound."

"And the eternity of sound is established by the argument discoverable in the Vedic text, ' with an eternal voice, O Virupa '. Now, though this sentence had another object in view, it, nevertheless, declares the eternity of language, and hence sound is eternal."

Such is the argument by Jaimini in favour of his thesis that the Vedas are eternal and not made by man, not even by God.

The bases on which his thesis rests are simple.

*Firstly* God has no body and no palate and therefore he could not utter the Vedas.

*Secondly*, Assuming God had a body, God could not perceive things which are beyond the reach of the senses while the Vedas contain things beyond the reach of human senses.

*Thirdly*, The connection between a word and its meaning is eternal.

*Fourthly*, Sound is eternal.

*Fifthly*, Because sound is eternal words which are made up of sounds are also eternal.

*Sixthly* Because words are eternal therefore the Vedas are eternal and because the Vedas are eternal they are not made by man nor by God.

What can one say of these premises? Can there be anything more absurd? Who can accept that the Vedas contain something not comprehensible by human senses ? Who can accept that there is an eternal connection between a word and its meaning ? Who can accept that sound is not created nor manifested but is eternal?

Having regard to these absurd premises one is led to ask why did the Brahmins make such a desperate attempt for establishing a desperate conclusion? What did they want to gain thereby? Was it because the Vedas had been made the exponent of the Chaturvarna with the Brahmins as the Lord of all?

## **RIDDLE NO. 6**

### **THE CONTENTS OF THE VEDAS: HAVE THEY ANY MORAL OR SPIRITUAL VALUE?**

|

If the Vedas are to be accepted as binding and Infallible then what they teach must have ethical and spiritual value. Nobody can regard a rag to be binding and infallible because a Philosopher like Jaimini came forward to lend his authority to such a proposal. Have the Vedas any ethical or spiritual value? Every Hindu who regards the Vedas as infallible is bound to consider this question.

Modern writers have expressed views which deny any spiritual value to the Vedas. As an illustration one may refer to the views of Prof. Muir. According to Prof. Muir:

"The whole character of these compositions and the circumstances under which, from internal evidence, they appear to have arisen, are in harmony with the supposition that they were nothing more than the natural expression of the personal hopes and feelings of those ancient bards of whom they were

first recited. In these songs the Aryan sages celebrated the praises of their ancestral gods (while at the same time they sought to conciliate their goodwill by a variety of oblations supposed to be acceptable to them), and besought of them all the blessings which men in general desired— health, wealth, long life, cattle, offspring, victory over their enemies, forgiveness of sin, and in some cases also celestial felicity."

It would no doubt be objected that all foreign scholars are prejudiced and that their views cannot therefore be accepted. Fortunately we are not altogether dependent upon the views of foreigners. There are leaders of indigeneous schools of thought which have taken the same view. The most notorious example is that of the Charvakas.

The opposition of Charvaka can be seen from the following quotation which reproduces his line of argument against the Vaidikas: "

If you object that, if there be no such thing as happiness in a future world, then how should men of experienced wisdom engage in the agnihotra and other sacrifices, which can only be performed with great expenditure of money and bodily fatigue. Your objection cannot be accepted as any proof to the contrary, since the agnihotra, etc., are only useful as means of livelihood: for the Veda is tainted by three faults of untruth, self-contradiction, and tautology; then again the impostors who call themselves Vaidic pundits are mutually destructive, as the authority of the Jnan-Kanda is overthrown by those who maintain the authority of the Karma-Kanda and those who maintain the authority of the Karma-Kanda reject that of the Jnan-Kanda; and lastly, the three Vedas themselves are only the incoherent rhapsodies of knaves and to this effect runs the popular saying:

"The Agnihotra, the three Vedas, the ascetic, three staves, and smearing oneself with ashes," Brihaspati says, "these are but means of livelihood for those who have no manliness nor sense." Brahaspati is another example of the same school of thought. Brahaspati was far more bold and militant in his opposition to the Vedas than the Charvakas. As reported by Madhava Acharya, Brahaspati argued:—

"There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in another world: Nor do the actions of the four castes, orders etc., produce any real effect. The Agnihotra, the three Vedas, the ascetic's three stages and smearing one's self with ashes, . . . were made by Nature as the livelihood of those destitute of knowledge and manliness; If a beast slain in the Jyotishtoma rite will itself go to heaven; why then does not the sacrificer forthwith offer his own father?

If the Sraddha produces gratification to beings who are dead, then here, too, in the case of travellers when they start, it is needless to give provisions for the journey.

If beings in heaven are gratified by our offering the Sraddha here, then why not give the food down below to those who are standing on the housetop?

While life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on ghee even though he runs in debt;

When once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return again?

If he who departs from the body goes to another world, how is that he comes not back again restless for love of his kindred?

Hence it is only a means of livelihood that Brahmans have established here.

All these ceremonies are for the dead, there is no other fruit anywhere. The three authors of the Vedas were buffoons, knaves and demons.

All the well-known formulas of the pundits Jarphari, Turphari, and all the obscene rites for the queen commanded in the Aswamedha:

These were invented by buffoons, and so all the various kinds of present? to the priests.

While the eating of flesh was similarly commended by night prowling demons."

If the opinions of the Charvaka and Brahaspati are not accepted there is plenty of other evidence. That evidence is recorded in the books of the various schools of philosophy such as the Nyaya, Vaishashikha, Purva and Uttar Mimamsa. It must be said to the credit of the authors of the text-books of these philosophies that before proceeding to defend the authority of the Vedas they have been very careful to set out the case of their opponents who were opposed to the authority of the Vedas. This fact enables us to prove two things: (1) That there was a school of thought which was opposed to recognize the Vedas as books of authority; (2) That they were a respectable group of people whose opinions the defenders of the authority of the Vedas were bound to consider. I reproduce below the case of the opponents as set out in the Nyaya and the Purva Mirnarnsa.

Gotama the author of the Nyaya system of Philosophy was an upholder of the doctrine of the authority of the Vedas. He has summarized the arguments of his opponents in Sutra 57 which reads as follows:

"The Veda has no authority, since it has the defects of falsehood, self-contradiction, and tautology. That verbal evidence, which is distinct from such as relates to visible objects, i.e., the Veda, has no authority. Why? Because it has the defects of falsehood etc."

" Of these defects, that of falsehood is established by the fact that we sometimes observe that no fruit results from performing the sacrifice for a son, or the like. ' Self-contradiction ' is a discrepancy between a former and a later declaration. Thus the Veda says 'he sacrifices when the Sun is risen; he

sacrifices when the Sun is not yet risen. He sacrifices, (I cannot explain the next words says Muir,) A tawny (dog?) carries away the oblation of him who sacrifices before the Sun has risen: and both of these two carry off the oblation of him who sacrifices. Now here there is a contradiction between the words which enjoin sacrifices and the words which intimate by censure that those sacrifices will occasion disastrous results. Again, the Veda has no authority, owing to its 'tautology', as where it is said, he repeats the first thrice, he repeats the last thrice. For as the lastness ultimately coincides with the firstness and as there is a triple repetition of the words, this sentence is tautological. Now since these particular sentences have no authority, the entire Veda will be proved by these specimens to stand in the same predicament, since all its other parts have the same author, or are of the same character, as these portions."

Coming to Jaimini. He summarises the views of the opponents of the Vedas in the first part of Sutras 28 and 32 of his Purva Mimamsa. Sutra 28 says:

" It is also objected that the Vedas cannot be eternal, because we observe that persons, who are not eternal, but subject to birth and death, are mentioned in them. Thus it is said in the Veda ' Babara Pravahani desired ', ' Kusurvinda Auddalaki desired '. Now, as the sentences of the Veda in which they are mentioned, could not have existed before these persons were born, it is clear that these sentences had a beginning, and being thus non-eternal, they are proved to be of human composition."

Sutra 32 says:

" It is asked how the Veda can constitute proof of duty when it contains such incoherent nonsense as the following: 'An old ox, in blanket and slippers, is standing at the door and singing benedictions. A Brahman female, desirous of offspring, asks, ' Pray O King, what is the meaning of intercourse on the day of the new moon?' or the following: 'the cows celebrated this sacrifice'."

This is also the view of Yaska the author of Nirukta who says:

(Of the four kinds of verses specified in the preceding section), (a) those which address a god as absent, (b) those which address him as present, and (c) those which address the worshippers as present and the god as absent, are the most numerous, while (d) those which refer to the speaker himself are rare. It happens also that a god is praised without any blessing being invoked, as in the hymn (R.V.i. 32). " I declare the heroic deeds of Indra," etc. Again, blessings are invoked without any praise being offered, as in the words, 'May, I see well with my eyes, be resplendent in my face, and hear well with my ears'. This frequently occurs in the Adhvaryava (Yajur), and in the sacrificial formula. Then again we find oaths and curses as in the words (R.V.vii. 104, 15), 'May I die today, if I am a Yatudhana,' etc. Further, we observe the desire



to describe some particular state of things, as in the verse (R. V. x. 129, 2). 'Death was not then, nor immortality,' etc. Then there is lamentation, arising out of a certain state of thing, as in the verse (R. V. x. 95, 14), 'The beautiful god will disappear and never return,' etc. Again we have blame and praise, as in the words (R. V. x. 117, 6). 'The man who eats alone, sins alone, etc. So, too, in the hymn to dice (R. V. x. 34, 13) there is a censure upon dice, and a commendation of agriculture. Thus the objects for which the hymns were seen by the rishis were very various."

To quote the words of Yaska again—

" Each particular hymn has for its deity the God to whom the Rishi, seeking to obtain any object of desire which he longs for, addresses his prayer." If this is not enough to prove that there is no ethical or spiritual Value in the Vedas further evidence could be added.

As to morality there is hardly any discussion about it in the Rig-Veda. Nor does the Rig-Veda contain elevating examples of moral life. Three illustrations of cases on the other side may well be given:

First is the conversation between *Yama* and *Yami* who were brother and sister.

"(Yami speaks). I invite my friend to friendship, having come over the vast and desert ocean may Vedhas, after reflecting, place in the earth the offspring (of thee) the father, endowed with excellent qualities."

"(Yama speaks). Thy friend desires not this friendship, for although of one origin, she is of a different form; the hero sons of the great Asura (are) the upholders of heaven, enjoying vast renown."

"(Yami speaks). The immortals take pleasure in (a union) like this which is forbidden to every mortal; let thy mind then concur with mine, and as the progenitor (of all) was the husband (of his daughter), do thou enjoy my person"

"(Yama speaks). We have not done what was done formerly; for how can we who speak truth, utter now that which is untrue? Gandharva (the sun) was in the watery (firmament), and the water was his bride. She is our common parent, hence our near affinity."

"(Yami speaks). The divine omniform generator Twashtri, the progenitor, made us two husband and wife, even in the womb; none frustrate his undertaking; earth and heaven are conscious of this our (union)."

"(Yama speaks). Who knows anything of this (his) first day (of existence)? Who has beheld it? Who has here revealed it? The dwelling of Mitra and of Varuna is vast. What sayest thou, who punishest men with hell?"

"(Yami speaks). The desire of Yama hath approached me Yami, to lie with him in the same bed; I will abandon my person as a wife to her husband; let

us exert ourselves in union like the two wheels of a wagon."

"(Yama speaks). The spies of the Gods, which wander upon earth, never stop, never close their eyes. Associate quickly, deconstructress with some other than with me, and exert yourselves in union, like the two wheels of a wagon."

"(Yami speaks). To him (Yama) let every worshipper sacrifice both day and night, on him let the eye of the Sun repeatedly rise; (for him may) the kindred pair (day and night unite) with heaven and earth. Yami will adhere to the non-affinity of Yama."

"(Yama speaks). The subsequent ages will come, when sisters will choose one who is not a brother (as a husband); therefore, auspicious one, choose another husband than me, and make thine arm a pillow for thy mate."

"(Yami speaks). Is he a brother whose sister has no lord? Is she a sister (whose brother) misfortune approaches? Overcome by desire, I strongly urge this one request; unite thy person with mine."

"(Yama speaks). I will not unite my person with thine; they call him who approaches a sister, a sinner. Enjoy pleasure with some other than me; thy brother, auspicious one, has no such desire."

" (Yami speaks). Alas, Yama, thou art feeble; we understand not thy mind or thy heart. Some other female exbrances thee as a girth a horse, or as a creeper a tree."

"(Yama speaks). Do thou, Yami, embrace another; and let another embrace thee as a creeper a tree; seek his affection, let him seek thine; and make a happy union."

"May Agni, the destroyer of the Rakshasas consenting to our prayer, drive hence (the evil spirit) who (in the form of) sickness assails thine embryo, who, as the disease durnaman, assails thy womb."

"May Agni concurring in our prayer, destroy the cannibal who, as sickness, assails thine embryo, who, as the disease durnaman, assails thy womb."

" May we exterminate from hence (the evil spirit) who destroys the impregnating energy, the germ as it settles, the moving embryo, who seeks to destroy (the babe) when born."

" May we exterminate from hence (the evil spirit), who separates thy thighs, who lies between husband and wife, who entering thy womb, devours (the seeds). May we exterminate from hence (the evil spirit), who in the form of brother, husband, or paramour, approaches thee, and seeks to destroy thy offspring."

" May we exterminate from hence (the evil spirit) who, having beguiled thee by sleep or darkness, approaches thee, and seeks to destroy thy offspring."

Take some of the Hymns or prayers that are to be found in the Rig-Veda. The following are a few of them—

1. Oh ! God Vayu, how very beautiful you are. We have prepared the Somarasa (an intoxicating drink) with spices. Pray come and drink it and grant us our prayers—Rig. Ved. I. 1.2.1.

2. Oh! God Indra. Bring ye wealth for our protection. Let the wealth that you bring make us happy be increasing and everlasting and help us to kill our enemies—1. 1.8.1.

3. Oh! ye people whenever you are performing your yajna, fail not to praise the Gods Indra and Agni. Advance their position and sing their praises in the Gayatri Meter—I. 21.2.

4. Oh ! ye Agni, please bring the wives of the Gods and Twashta who are eager to come and drink Soma—I. 22.9.

5. We pray that the Gods' wives come to us with all available wings and with all happiness—I. 22.11.

6. I am praying the wives of Indra, Varuna and Agni to come to my place to drink Soma.

7. Oh! Varuna, we are supplicating before you to remove your anger. Oh! ye Asura, you are all wise, relieve us from our sins—I. 24.14.

8. Our Somarasa has been prepared by women who have churned it backward and forward. Oh! ye Indra we pray you to come and drink this Soma—1. 28.3.

9. Your enemies who do not make any offering to you may disappear and let your followers who do prosper. Oh ! Indra give us best cows and best horses and make us famous in the world.—1. 29.4.

10. Oh! Agni save us from Rakshasas, from cunning enemies, from those who hate us and want to kill us.—1. 36.15.

11. Oh! Indra, you are a hero. Come and drink the Soma we have prepared and be ready to give us wealth. Loot the wealth of those who do not make you any offering and give the same to us—1. 81-8-9.

12. Oh! Indra, drink this Soma which is the best, giving immortality and most intoxicating.—I. 84-4.

13. Oh ! Adityas, you come to give us your blessings. You give us victory in war. You are wealthy. You are charitable. Just as a chariot is pulled through a difficult path in the same way you pull us through our dangers.—1. 106-22.

14. Oh ! ye Marutas. . . .your followers are singing your praises. Be pleased to come and sit on the grass-cushion prepared for you for the purpose of drinking Soma.—VII. 57-1-2.

15. Oh! ye Mitra-Varuna we have offered you worship in the yajna. Be pleased to accept it and save us from all dangers—VII. 60-12.

These are only a few verses out of a large bundle which form the Rig-Veda.

But there can be no doubt that this sample small as it is is true to bulk.

I may state that I have deliberately omitted a good many obscene passages to be found in the Rig-Veda and Yajur-Veda. Those who have any curiosity in the matter might look up the conversation between Surya and Pushan in Rig-Veda Mandal X. 85.37 and between Indra and Indrani in Rig-Veda. Mandal X. 86.6. A further obscenity will also be found in the Ashvamedha Section of the Yajur-Veda.

Leaving these obscenities aside and confining oneself to the prayer portion of the Rig-Veda can any one say that these are morally or spiritually elevating prayers?

As to philosophy there is nothing of it in the Rig-Veda. As Prof. Wilson observes there is in the Rig-Veda, which is the stock Veda, scarcely any indication or doctrinal or philosophical speculation, no allusion to the later notions of the several schools, nor is there any hint of metempsychosis, or of the doctrine intimately allied to it, of the repeated renovation of the world. The Vedas may be useful as a source of information regarding the social life of the Aryans. As a picture of primitive life it is full of curiosity but there is nothing elevating. There are more vices and a few virtues.

## II

We may now turn to the Atharva-Veda and examine its contents. The best I can do is to present the following extracts from the table of contents of the Atharva-Veda.

Book 1. Charms to cure diseases and possession by demons of disease (bhaishagyan).

v, 22. Charm against takman (fever) and related diseases.

vi, 20. Charm against takman (fever).

i, 25. Charm against takman (fever).

vii, 116. Charm against takman (fever).

v, 4. Prayer to the Kushtha-plant to destroy takman (fever).

xix, 39. Prayer to the Kushtha-plant to destroy takman (fever) and other ailments.

i, 12. Prayer to lightning, conceived as the cause of fever, headache, and cough.

i, 22. Charm against jaundice and related diseases.

vi, 14. Charm against the disease halasa.

vi, 105. Charm against cough.

i, 2. Charm against excessive discharges from the body.

ii, 3. Charm against excessive discharges from the body, undertaken with spring-water.

- vi, 44. Charm against excessive discharges from the body.
- i, 3. Charm against constipation and retention of urine.
- vi, 90. Charm against internal pain (colic) due to the missiles of Rudra.
- i, 10. Charm against dropsy.
- vii, 83. Charm against dropsy.
- vi, 24. Dropsy, heart-disease, and kindred maladies cured by flowing water.
- vi, 80. An oblation to the sun, conceived as one of the two.
- ii, 8. Charm against kshetriya, hereditary disease.
- ii, 10. Charm against kshetriya, hereditary disease.
- iii, 7. Charm against kshetriya, hereditary disease.
- i, 23. Leprosy cured by a dark plant.
- i, 24. Leprosy cured by a dark plant.
- vi, 83. Charm for curing scrofulous sores called *apakit*.
- vii, 76. A. Charm for curing scrofulous sores called *apakit*.
- B. Charm for curing tumours called *gayana*.
- C. Stanza sung at the mid-day pressure of Soma.
- vii, 74. A. Charm for curing scrofulous sores called *apakit*.
- B. Charm to appease jealousy.
- C. Prayer to Agni, the lord of vows.
- vi, 25. Charm against scrofulous sores upon neck and shoulders.
- vi, 57. Urine (*galasha*) as a cure for scrofulous.
- iv, 12. Charm with the plant *arundhati* (*laksha*) for the cure of fractures.
- v, 5. Charm with the plant *silaki* (*laksha*) *arundhati* for the cure of wounds.
- vi, 109. The pepper-corn as a cure for wounds.
- i, 17. Charm to stop the flow of blood.
- ii, 31. Charm against worms.
- ii, 32. Charm against worms in cattle.
- v, 23. Charm against worms in children.
- iv, 6. Charm against poison.
- lv, 7. Charm against poison.
- vi, 100. Ants as an antidote against poison.
- v, 13. Charm against snake-poison.
- vi, 12. Charm against snake-poison.
- vii, 56. Charm against the poison of serpents, scorpions and insects.
- vi, 16. Charm against ophthalmia.
- vi, 21. Charm to promote the growth of hair.
- vi, 136. Charm with the plant *nitauni* to promote the growth of hair.
- vi, 137. Charm to promote the growth of hair.
- iv, 4. Charm to promote virility.
- vi, 111. Charm against Mania.

iv, 37. Charm with the plant agasringi to drive out Rakshasas, Apsaras and Gandharvas.

ii, 9. Possession by demons of disease, cured by an amulet of ten kinds of wood.

iv, 36. Charm against demons (pisaka) conceived as the cause of disease.

ii, 25. Charm with the plant prisniparni against the demon of disease called kanva.

vi, 32. Charm for driving away demons (Rakshas and Pisakas).

ii, 4. Charm with an amulet derived from the gangidatree against diseases and demons.

xix, 34. Charm with an amulet derived from the gangidatree against diseases and demons.

xix, 35. Charm with an amulet derived from the gangidatree against diseases and demons.

vi, 85. Exorcism of disease by means of an amulet from the varana-tree.

vi, 127. The kipuddru-tree as a panacea.

xix, 38. The healing properties of *hdellium*.

vi, 91. Barley and water as universal remedies.

viii, 7. Hymn to all magic and medicinal plants used as a universal remedy.

vi, 96. Plants as a panacea.

ii, 33. Charm to secure perfect health.

ix, 8. Charm to procure immunity from all diseases.

ii, 29. Charm for obtaining long life and prosperity by transmission of disease.

## II. Prayers for long life and health (ayushyani).

iii, 11. Prayer for health and long life.

ii, 28. Prayer for long life pronounced over a body.

iii, 31. Prayer for health and long life.

vii, 53. Prayer for long life.

viii, 1. Prayer for exemption from the dangers of death.

viii, 2. Prayers for exemption from the dangers of death.

v, 30. Prayer for exemption from disease and death.

iv, 9. Salve (angana) as a protector of life and limb.

iv, 10. The pearl and its shell as an amulet bestowing long life and prosperity.

xix, 26. Gold as an amulet for long life.

## III. Imprecations against demons, sorcerers, and enemies (abhikarikani and

Krityapratiharanan).

- i, 7. Against sorcerers and demons.
- i, 8. Against sorcerers and demons.
- i,16. Charm with lead, against demons and sorcerers.
- vi, 2. The soma-oblation directed against demons (rakshas).
- ii, 14. Charm against a variety of female demons, conceived as hostile to men, cattle and home.
- iii, 9. Against Vishkandha and Kabava (hostile demons).
- iv, 20. Charm with a certain plant (sadampushna) which exposes demons and enemies.
- iv, 17. Charm with the apamarga-plant, against sorcery, demons and enemies.
- iv, 18. Charm with the apamarga-plant against sorcery, demons and enemies.
- iv, 19. Mystic power of the apamarga-plant, against demons and sorcerers.
- vii, 65. Charm with the apamarga-plant against curses, and the consequence of sinful deeds.
- x, 1. Charm to repel sorceries or spells.
- v, 14. Charm to repel sorceries or spells.
- v, 31. Charm to repel sorceries or spells.
- viii, 5. Prayer for protection addressed to a talisman made from the wood of a sraktya-tree.
- x, 3. Praise of the virtue of an amulet derived from the varana-tree.
- x,6. Praise of the virtues of an amulet of khadira-wood in the shape of a ploughshare.
- ix, 16. Prayer to Varuna for protection against treacherous designs.
- ii, 12. Imprecation against enemies thwarting holy work.
- vii, 70. Frustration of the sacrifice of an enemy.
- ii, 7. Charm against curses and hostile plots undertaken with a certain plant.
- iii, 6. The asvattha-tree as a destroyer of enemies.
- vi. 75. Oblation for the suppression of enemies (naibadhyam havih).
- vi. 37. Curse against one that practises hostile charms.
- vii. 13. Charm to deprive enemies of their strength.

#### IV. Charms pertaining to women (strikarmani).

- ii, 36. Charm to obtain a husband.
- vi, 60. Charm to obtain a husband.
- vi, 82. Charm for obtaining a wife.

- vi. 78. Blessing for a married couple.
- vii, 36. Love-charm spoken by a bridal couple.
- vii. 37. Charm pronounced by the bride over the bridegroom.
- vi, 81. A bracelet as an amulet to ensure conception.
- iii. 23. Charm for obtaining a son (pumsavanam).
- vi, 11. Charm for obtaining a son (pumsavanam).
- vii, 35. An incantation to make a woman sterile.
- vi. 17. Charm to prevent miscarriage.
- i, 11. Charm for easy parturition.
  - i. 34. Charm with licorice, to secure the love of a woman.
  - ii, 30. Charm to secure the love of a woman.
  - vi. 8. Charm to secure the love of a woman.
  - vi, 9. Charm to secure the love of a woman.
  - vi, 102. Charm to secure the love of a woman.
  - iii, 25. Charm to secure the passionate love of a woman.
  - vii. 38. Charm to secure the love of a man.
  - vi, 130. Charm to arouse the passionate love of a man.
  - vi, 132. Charm to arouse the passionate love of a man.
  - iv, 5. Charm at an assignation.
  - vi, 77. Charm to cause the return of a truant woman.
  - vi, 18. Charm to allay jealousy.
  - i, 14. A woman's incantation against her rival.
  - iii. 18. Charm of a woman against a rival *or* co-wife.
  - vi, 138. Charm for depriving a man of his virility.
  - i. 18. Charm to remove evil bodily characteristics from a woman.
  - vi. 110. Expiatory charm for a child born under an unlucky star.
  - vi. 140. Expiation for the irregular appearance of the first pair of teeth.

#### V. Charms pertaining to royalty (ragakarmani).

- iv. 8. Prayer at the consecration of a king.
- iii, 3. Charm for the restoration of an exiled king.
- iii, 4. Prayer at the election of a king.
- iv, 22. Charm to secure the superiority of a king.
- iii, 5. Praise of an amulet derived from the parna-tree, designed to strengthen royal power.
- i, 9. Prayer for earthly and heavenly success.
- vi, 38. Prayer for lustre and power.
- vi, 39. Prayer for glory (yajas).
- viii 8. Battle-charm.



- i, 19. Battle-charm against arrow-wounds.
- iii, 1. Battle-charm for confusing the enemy.
- iii, 2. Battle-charm for confusing the enemy.
- vi, 97. Battle-charm of a king upon the eve of battle.
- vi, 99. Battle-charm of a king upon the eve of battle.
- xi, 9. Prayer to Arbudi and Nyarbudi for help in battle.
- xi, 10. Prayer to Trishmdhi for help in battle.
- v, 20. Hymn *to* the battle-drum.
- v, 21. Hymn to the battle-drum, the terror *of* the enemy.

VI. Charms to secure harmony, influence in the Assembly, and the like (sammanasyani).

- iii, 30. Charm to secure harmony.
- vi, 73. Charm to allay discord.
- vi, 74. Charm to allay discord.
- vii, 52. Charm against strife and blood shed.
- vi, 64. Charm to allay discord.
- vi, 42. Charm *to* appease anger.
- vi, 43. Charm to appease anger.
- vii, 12. Charm to procure influence in the assembly.
- ii, 27. Charm against opponents in debate undertaken with the pata-plant.
- vi, 94. Charm to bring about submission to one's will.

VII. Charms to secure prosperity in house, field cattle business, gambling and kindred matters.

- iii, 12. Prayer at the building of a house.
- vi, 142. Blessing during the sowing of grain.
- vi, 79. Charm for procuring increase of grain.
- vi, 50. Exorcism of vermin infesting grain in the field.
- vii, II. Charm to protect grain from lightning.
- ii, 26. Charm for the prosperity of cattle.
- iii, 14. Charm for the prosperity of the cattle.
- vi, 59. Prayer to the plant arundhati for protection to cattle.
- vi, 70. Charm to secure the attachment of a cow to her calf.
- iii, 28. Formula in expiation of the birth of twin-calves.
- vi, 92. Charm to endow a horse with swiftness.
- iii, 13. Charm for conducting a river into a new channel.
- vi, 106. Charm to ward off danger from fire.

iv, 3. Shepherd's charm against wild beasts and robbers..

iii, 15. A merchant's prayer.

iv, 38. A. Prayer for success in gambling.

**B. Prayer to secure the return of calves that have strayed to a distance.**

vii, 50. Prayer for success at dice.

vi, 56. Exorcism of serpents from the premises.

x, 4. Charm against serpents invoking the horse of Pedu that slays serpents.

xi, 2. Prayer to Bhava and Sarva for protection from dangers.

iv, 28. Prayer to Bhava and Sarva for protection from dangers.

vii, 9. Charm for finding lost property.

vi, 128. Propitiation of the weather-prophet.

xi, 6. Prayer for deliverance from calamity, addressed to the entire pantheon.

VIII. Charms in expiation of sin and defilement.

vi, 45. Prayer against mental delinquency.

vi, 26. Charm to avert evil.

vi, 114. Expiatory formula for imperfections in the sacrifice.

vi, 115. Expiatory formulas for sins.

vi, 112. Expiation for the precedence of a younger brother over an elder.

vi, 113. Expiation for certain heinous crimes.

vi, 120. Prayer for heaven after remission of sins.

vi, 27. Charm against pigeons regarded as ominous birds.

vi, 29. Charm against pigeons regarded as ominous birds.

vi, 29. Charm against ominous pigeons and owls.

vii, 64. Expiation when one is defiled by a black bird of omen.

vi, 46. Exorcism of evil dreams

vii, 115. Charm for the removal of evil characteristics, and the acquisition of auspicious.

### III

It will thus be seen that the Atharva-Veda is nothing but a collection of sorcery, black-magic and medicine. Three-fourths of it is full of sorcery and black magic. It must not however be assumed that it is only the Atharva-Veda which contains black-magic and sorcery. The Rig-Veda is not altogether free

from it. There are in it Mantras relating to black magic and sorcery. I give below three Suktas which deal with this matter:

### **SUKTA XVII (CXLV)**

The deity or rather the aim of the hymn is the getting rid of a rival wife; the Rishi is Indrani, the metre of the last verse is Pankati, of the rest Anushtubh.

1. I dig up this most potent medicinal creeper, by which (a wife) destroys a rival wife, by which she secures to herself her husband.
2. O (plant) with up-turned leaves, auspicious, sent by the Gods, powerful, remove my rival and make my husband mine alone.
3. Excellent (plant) may I too be excellent amongst the excellent, and may she who is my rival be vile amongst the vile.
4. I will not even utter her name, no (woman) takes pleasure in that person: may we remove the other rival wife to a distance.
5. I am triumphing, thou art triumphant: we two being powerful will triumph over my rival.
6. I make thee the triumphant (herb) my pillow, I support thee with that more triumphant (pillow): let thy mind hasten to me as a cow to her calf, let it speed on its way like water.

### **SUKTA IV (CLV)**

The deity of verses 1 and 4 is the averting of misfortune (Alakshmi), of verses 2 and 3 Brahmanaspati, and of verse 5 the Viswadevas; the Rishi is Sirimbitha, the son of Bharadwaja, the metre is Anushtubh.

1. Miserable, ill-favoured, deformed ever-railing (goddess), go to thy mountain; with these exploits of Sirimbitha we scare thee away.
2. May she be scared away from this (world), scared away from the next (world), the destructress of all embryos; sharp-horned Brihaspati approach, driving away Distress.
3. The wood which floats by the seashore far off, remote from man, seize that, (O, goddess) hard to destroy, and therewith go to a distant shore.
4. Utterers of discordant sounds, when swiftly moving you departed, all the enemies of Indra were slain, disappearing like bubbles.
5. These (Viswadevas) have brought back the (stolen) cattle, they have built up the fire: they have provided food for the Gods. Who will overcome them?

## SUKTA XII (CLXIII)

The deity is the cure of phthisis: the Rishi is Vivrihan, the son of Kasyapa, the metre is Anushtubh.

1. I banish disease from thine eyes, from thy head, from thy nose, from thy ears, from thy chin, from thy brain, from thy tongue.

2. I banish disease from thy neck, from thy sinews, from thy bones, from thy joints, from thy upper arms, from thy shoulders, and from thy fore-arms.

3. I banish disease from thine entrails, from thy anus, from thine abdomen, and from thy heart, from thy kidneys, from thy liver, from thy (other) viscera.

4. I banish disease from thy thighs, from thy knees, from thy heels, from thy toes, from thy loins, from thy buttocks, from thy private parts.

5. I banish disease from thy urethra, from thy bladder, from thy hair, from thy nails, from thy whole person.

6. I banish disease from each limb, from each hair, from each joint where it is generated, from thy whole person.

Enough has been extracted from the Vedas to show that they contain nothing that can be said to be spiritually or morally elevating. Neither the subject matter nor contents of the Vedas justify the infallibility with which they have been invested. Why then did the Brahmins struggle so hard to clothe them with sanctity and infallibility ?

### RIDDLE NO. 7

#### **THE TURN OF THE TIDE OR HOW DID THE BRAHMINS DECEARE THE VEDAS TO BE LOWER THAN THE LOWEST OF THEIR SHASTRAS?**

The religious literature of the Hindus includes (1) The Vedas, (2) The Brahmanas, (3) The Aranyakas, (4) Upanishads, (5) Sutras, (6) Itihas, (7) Smritis and (8) Puranas.

As has been pointed out there was a time when they occupied the same status. There was no distinction of superior or inferior, sacred or profane, fallible or infallible.

Eater on as we have shown the Vedic Brahmins felt that they must make a distinction between the Vedas and other classes of their religious literature. They made the Vedas not only superior to other classes of literature but they made them sacred and infallible. In evolving their dogma of the infallibility of the Vedas they made a distinction and divided their sacred writings in two classes (1) Shruti and (2) Non-Shruti. In the first division they placed only two of the eight classes of literature spoken of above namely-(1) Samhitas and (2)

the Brahmanas. The rest they declared as Non-Shruti.

II

When this distinction was first made it is not possible to say. The more important question, however, is on what basis was this division made? Why were Itihas and Puranas excluded? Why were Aranyakas and Upanishads excluded? Why were the Sutras excluded? One can well understand why Itihas and Puranas were excluded from Shruti. At the time when the division took place they were too elementary and too undeveloped and in all probability included in the Brahmanas. Similarly one can well understand why the Aranyakas are not

***This is a 21-page typed MS originally entitled ' The Supersession of the Vedas ', with several corrections and modifications by the author himself. This chapter seems complete as the last para of this chapter is concluded in the handwriting of the author.—Ed.***

specifically mentioned as a part of the Shruti. They are a part of the Brahmanas and for that reason it was probably unnecessary to say expressly that they are part of the Shruti. The question of the Upanishads and the Sutras remains a puzzle. Why were they excluded from the Shruti ? The question regarding the Upanishads is the subject matter of another chapter. Here it is proposed to deal with the question of the Sutras. Because the reasons for the exclusion of the Sutras it is not possible to comprehend. If there were good reasons for including the Brahmanas in the category of Shruti the same reasons could not fail to justify the inclusion of the Sutras. As Prof. Max Muller observes:

"We can understand how a nation might be led to ascribe a superhuman origin to their ancient national poetry, particularly if that poetry consisted chiefly of prayers and hymns addressed to their gods. But it is different with the prose compositions of the Brahmanas. The reasons why the Brahmanas which are evidently so much more modern than the Mantras, were allowed to participate in the name of Sruti, could only have been because it was from these theological compositions, and not from the simple old poetry of the hymns, that a supposed divine authority could be derived for the greater number of the ambitious claims of the Brahmanas. But, although we need not ascribe any weight to the arguments by which the Brahmanas endeavoured to establish the contemporaneous origin of the Mantras and Brahmanas there seems to be no reason why we should reject as equally worthless the general opinion with regard to the more ancient date of both the Brahmanas and Mantras, if contrasted with the Sutras and the profane literature of India. It may easily happen, where there is a canon of sacred books, that later

compositions become incorporated together with more ancient works, as was the case with the Brahmanas. But we can hardly imagine that old and genuine parts should ever have been excluded from a body of sacred writings, and a more modern date ascribed to them, unless it be in the interest of a party to deny the authority of certain doctrines contained in these rejected documents. There is nothing in the later literature of the Sutras to warrant a supposition of this kind. We can find no reason why the Sutras should not have been ranked as Sruti, except the lateness of their date, if compared with the Brahmanas, and still more with the Mantras. Whether the Brahmanas themselves were aware that ages must have elapsed between the period during which most of the poems of their Rishis were composed, and the times which gave rise to the Brahmanas, is a question which we need hardly hesitate to answer in the affirmative. But the recklessness with which Indian theologians claim for these Brahmanas the same title and the same age as for the Mantras, shows that the reason must have been peculiarly strong which deterred them from claiming the same divine authority for the Sutras."

The exclusion of the Sutras from the category of Shruti is a riddle that calls for explanation.

There are other riddles which strike the student who cares to investigate into the subject. They relate to the changes in the content of the literature comprised in the term Shruti and their relative authority.

One such riddle relates to the class of literature called the Brahmanas. At one time the Brahmanas were included in the term Shruti. But later on they seem to have lost this position. For Manu\* seems to exclude the "Brahmanas" from the category of Shruti as may be seen from the following extract from his Smriti:

"By Shruti is meant the Veda, and by Smriti the institutes of law; the contents of these are not to be questioned by reason, since from them (a knowledge of) duty has shown forth. The Brahman who, relying on rationalistic treatises, shall condemn these two primary sources of knowledge must be excommunicated by the virtuous as a sceptic and reviler of the Vedas.... To those who are seeking a knowledge of duty, the Sruti is the supreme authority." Why were the Brahmanas excluded from Shruti?

### III

We may now turn to the class of literature called the Smritis, the most important of which are the Manu Smriti and the Yajnavalkya Smriti. The number of Smritis was ever on the increase and the composing of Smritis went on up to the advent of the British. Mitramistra refers to 57 Smritis, Nilakanta to 97 and Kamalakar to 131. The Smriti literature is bigger than any other class of religious literature regarded as sacred by the Hindus.

There are several points regarding the relation of the Smritis to the Vedas.

The first is that the Smriti was not recognized as part of the Dharma Shastra literature represented by the Dharma Sutras such as that of Baudhayana, Gautama or Apastambha. A Smriti originally dealt with social customs and conventions that were approved of and recommended by the learned leaders of society. As Prof. Altekar observes:

"In the beginning, Smritis were identical in nature and contents with *Sadacara* and were based upon it. When Smritis came into existence the scope of *Sadacara* became naturally reduced, as much of it was codified by Smritis. It began to denote those old practices which happened not to be codified in Smritis, or those new ones, which had acquired social approval at a period subsequent to the codification of the early Dharmasastras or Smritis." The second point to note is that the Smritis were treated as quite different from the Vedas or the Srutis. So far as their sanction and their authority were concerned they stood on absolutely different footing. The sanction behind the Sruti was divine. The sanction behind the Smriti was social. In the matter of their authority the Purva Mimarnsa lays down two rules. The first rule is that if there is a conflict between two texts of Sruti then both are authoritative and the presumption will be that the Vedas have given an option to follow one or the other. The second rule is that the text of a Smriti should be summarily rejected if it was opposed to the text of the Sruti. These rules were rigorously applied with the result that the Smritis could not acquire either the status or the authority of the Vedas.

Surprising as it may appear a time came when Brahmins took a summersault and gave the Smritis a status superior to that of the Vedas. As Prof. Altekar points out:

"The Smritis have actually overruled some of the specific dicta of Srutis that were not in consonance with the spirit of the age, or were coming into direct conflict with it. The Vedic practice was to perform *daiva karma* in the morning and the *pitr karma* in the afternoon. In later times the modern *pitr tarpana* came into vogue and it began to be offered in the morning, as the morning bath became the order of the day. Now this procedure is in direct conflict with the Vedic practice prescribed in the above-mentioned rule. Devamabhatta, the author of the *Smrticandrika*, however says that there is nothing wrong in this: the Sruti rule must be presumed to be referring to *pitr karman* other than *tarpana*. The Sruti literature shows that Visvamitra adopted Sunassepa, though he had a hundred sons living: this would thus permit a person to adopt a son even when he had a number of his own sons living. But Mitramisra says that such a deduction would be wrong: we shall have to assume that the Smriti practice is also based upon a Sruti text, which is not now available but

the existence of which will have to be assumed." "The Vedic passage, *na seso 'gne' nyajatamasti* certainly disapproves of the practice of the adoption of a son, which is clearly recommended in later times by the Smriti literature. This is a clear example of a Sruti being thrown overboard by a Snnriti. But Mitramisra says that there is nothing wrong about the procedure. The Sruti passage is a mere *arthavada*; it does not lay down any injunction. The Smritis on the other hand prescribe adoption so that *homas* etc. should be properly performed. *Arthavada Sruti* is thus being fittingly overruled by a Snnriti text, which has a *vidhi* for its purport."

"The custom of the Sati of the later age is in direct conflict with the vedic injunction prohibiting suicide. Apararka, however, argues that the conflict with Sruti should not invalidate the custom. For the Sruti passage lays down a general principle disapproving suicide, while the Smritis lay down a special exception in the case of a widow."

Whether the customs of a Sati and adoption are good or not is a different question. Somehow or other society had come to approve of them. Smritis gave canonical sanction to them and sought to defend them even against the authority of the Vedas.

The question is why did the Brahmins after having struggled so hard for establishing the supremacy of the Vedas degrade the Vedas and invest the Smritis with authority superior to that of the Vedas? They did so much to raise the authority of the Vedas above the divine. Why did they drag them below the Smritis which had nothing but social sanction?

The steps they adopted were so ingenious and artificial that one cannot help feeling that there must have been some definite motive which led the Brahmins to give the Smritis a status superior to that of the Vedas.

To give some idea as to how artificial, ingenious and desparate these arguments were it might be useful to give just a brief outline of them.

As an illustration of an artificial argument, one may refer to the view propounded by Brahaspati. According to him, Sruti and Snnriti are the two eyes of the Brahmana, if he is void of one of them he becomes a one-eyed person.

As an illustration of an ingenious argument one may refer to the argument of Kumarila Bhatt. His argument is founded on the theory of lost Sruti. It was argued on behalf of the Smritis that their views cannot be set aside even when they are in direct conflict with the Srutis for they may quite possibly have been based upon a lost text of Sruti, and so the conflict is not a conflict between a text of Sruti and that of a Smriti. It is really a conflict between an existing and lost text of Sruti. Smriti therefore came to be represented as lost Sruti.



There is a third means adopted by the Brahmins to make the Smritis equal if not superior to the Vedas. It is to be found in the Atri Smriti. Atri says that those who do not respect the Smritis will be subject to curse. Atri's argument is that *Brahmanyam* arises only as a result of a joint study of the Sruti and Smriti and if a person studies the Vedas only but holds the Smriti in contempt he would be immediately condemned to be born as a beast for 21 generations.

Why did the Brahmins adopt such desperate means to place the Smritis on the same footing as the Sruti? What was their purpose? What was their motive?

Prof. Altekar's argument that the Smritis were given supremacy over the Vedas because they gave legal justification to customary law which was of later growth, cannot be accepted as adequate. If the case was that, there was law in the Vedic period and custom had grown later on; and if there was a conflict between the two, one could have understood the argument that the Smritis were given predominance because they set right the conflict by recognizing the progressive doctrines of the custom. This is not the case. There was no such thing as law in the Vedas. As Professor Kane points out:

"All law was customary and there was no necessity to give recognition to the customs because they were recognized by the people. Secondly the Smritis cannot be said to be more progressive than the Vedas. Barring the Chaturvarna doctrine which everybody knows the Vedas except in the matter of forms of worship left Society quite free to develop. What the Smritis have done is, take out the unprogressive element in the Vedas namely the Chaturvarna theory and to propagandize it and hammer it into the heads of the people."

Therefore there must be some other reason why the Brahmins gave supremacy to the Smritis over the Vedas.

The Brahmins were not content with their first acrobatics. They performed another.

The Smritis were followed in point of time by the Puranas. There are 18 Puranas and 18 Up-Puranas altogether 36. In one sense the subject matter of the Puranas is the same. They deal with the creation, preservation and destruction of the world. But in the rest of their contents they differ altogether. Some propagate the cult of Brahma, some the cult of Shiva, some the cult of Vishnu, some the cult of Vayu, some the cult of Agni, some the cult of Surya and some the cult of Goddesses and other deities. As has been noted there was a time when the Puranas were not included in the Shruti. In later times however a striking change seems to have taken place. The Puranas which were considered as too profane to be included in the Shruti were given a

superiority over the Vedas. The Vayu Purana says:

"First, of all the Shastras, the Purana was uttered by Brahma. Subsequently the Vedas issued from his mouth." The Matsya Purana not only claims priority of creation for the Puranas as against the Vedas, but also the qualities of eternity and identity with sound, which was once predicated of the Vedas alone. It says:

" Pitamaha (Brahma), first of all the immortals, took shape; then the Vedas with their Angas and Upangas (appendages and minor appendages), and the various modes of their textual arrangements, were manifested. The Purana, eternal, formed of sound, pure, extending to the length of a hundred crores of verses, was the first of the Sastras which Brahma uttered ; and afterwards the Vedas, issued from his mouth; and also the Mimansa and the Nyaya with its eightfold system of proofs.

The Bhagawat Purana claims equality of authority with the Vedas. It says:

"(Bramharatra) declared the Purana called the Bhagavata, which stands on an equality with the Veda."

The Brahma-Vaivartta Purana has the audacity to claim superiority over the Vedas. It says:

"That about which venerable sage, you have inquired, and which you desire, is all known to me, the essence of the Puranas, the preeminent Brahma-Vaivartta, which refutes the errors of the Puranas and Upa-puranas, and the Vedas."

This is the second acrobatic performed by the Brahmins in assigning priority, precedence, and authority to their sacred books.

This does not complete the story of the suppression of the Vedas. The worse is yet to come. The Puranas were followed by another class of literature called the *Tantras*. Their number is also quite formidable. Shankaracharya refers to 64 Tantras. There might be many more.

Traditionally the authorship of these works is attributed to Dattatreya, who was an incarnation of the Hindu trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. They are therefore to be regarded as equally the revelation of the three supreme divinities. In form, however, they are dependent on Shiva alone, who in dialogue with his wife Durga, or Kali, reveals the mystical doctrines and observances which are *to* be received and practised by his worshippers. This authoritative or 'higher tradition' is further said to have been delivered from his central or fifth mouth. As such it is pre-eminently sacred and secret and may not be revealed to the uninitiated. They are also called by the name Agamas, and as such are sometimes distinguished from Nigama, the text of the Vedas, Dharmashastras, and other sacred books.

The Tantras are regarded specially as the religious text-books of the Saktas

and of their various sects. There are different Tantrik schools, with variant traditions, the distinctions between which are little understood outside of their immediate circle of adherents. The ritual of the Tantras of the Dakshinacharins, however, is said to be pure and in harmony with the Vedas, while that of the Vamacharins is intended only for Shudras.

The teaching of the Tantras, as of the Puranas is essentially based on the Bhakti-Marga which is regarded by them as superior to the Karma-Marga and Jnana-Marga of the Brahmanas and Upanishads. Adoration of a personal deity is inculcated, especially of the wife of Shiva, who is worshipped as the source of all regenerative power. In all these writings the female principle is personified and made prominent, to the almost total exclusion of the male.

What is the relation of the Tantras to the Vedas? Kalluka Bhatta the well known commentator of Manu Smriti has no hesitation in asserting that Shruti is two-fold- *Vaidik* and *Tantrik*—which means that the Vedas and the Tantras stand on equal footing. While the Vaidik Brahmins like Kalluka Bhatta admitted the equality of the Tantras to the Vedas, the authors of the Tantras went much beyond. They claimed that the Vedas, the Shastras, and the Puranas are alike a common woman, but the Tantras are like a highborn woman conveying thereby that the Tantras are superior to the Vedas.

From this survey one thing is clear. The Brahmins have not been very steadfast in their belief regarding the sacred character of what they called their books of religion. They fought to maintain the thesis that the Vedas were not only sacred but that they were infallible. Not only they maintained that the Vedas were infallible but they spent their ingenuity to invent strange arguments to support the doctrine of infallibility. Yet they had not the slightest compunction to overthrow the position of the Vedas and to subordinate them first to the Smritis, then to the Puranas and lastly to the Tantras. The question of all questions is what made the Brahmins degrade the Vedas and supersede them by Smritis, Puranas and the Tantras if they regarded their Vedas as the most sacred?

### **RIDDLE NO. 8**

#### **HOW THE UPANISHADS DECLARED WAR ON THE VEDAS?**

What is the position of the Upanishads in relation to the Vedas? Are the two complimentary to each other or are they antagonistic? Of course, no Hindu would admit that the Vedas and Upanishads are repugnant to each other. On the contrary, it is the common belief of all Hindus that there is no antagonism between them and that both form part and parcel of the same single system of thought. Is this belief well-founded?

The principal reason for the rise of such a belief is to be found in the fact that the Upanishads are also known by another name which is called Vedanta. The word Vedanta has got two meanings. In one sense, it means the last parts of the Vedas. In the second sense, it means the essence of the Vedas. The word Vedanta being another name for the Upanishads, the Upanishads themselves have come to acquire these meanings. It is these meanings which are responsible for the common belief that there is no antagonism between the Vedas and the Upanishads.

To what extent are these meanings of the word Upanishads justified by facts? In the first place, it is well to note the meaning of the word Vedanta. What was the original meaning of the word Vedanta? Does it mean the last book of the Vedas? As observed by Prof. Max Muller\*:

"Vedanta is a technical term and did not mean originally the last portions of the Veda, or chapters placed, as it were, at the end of a volume of Vedic literature, but the end i.e., the object, the highest purpose of the Veda. There are, of course, passages, like the one in the Taittiriya-aranyaka (ed-Rajendra Mitra p. 820), which have been misunderstood both by native and European scholars, and where Vedanta means simply the end of the Veda: *yo vedadu svarah*

---

This 15-page typed MS with modifications in the handwriting of the author was originally entitled ' Vedas versus Upanishads '. Concluding two paragraphs are added by the author in his own handwriting.—Ed.

---

*prokto vedante ka pratishthitah*, ' the Om which is pronounced at the beginning of the Veda, and has its place also at the end of the Veda.' Here Vedanta stands simply in opposition to Vedadu, it is impossible to translate it, as Sayana does, by Vedanta or Upanishad. Vedanta, in the sense of philosophy, occurs in the Taittiriya-aranyaka p. 817, in a verse of the Narayana-upanishad repeated in the Mundak-upanishad III 2, 6 and elsewhere *vedantavignamuniskitarah*, 'those who have well understood the object of the knowledge arising from the Vedanta ' not from the last books of the Veda and *Svetasvatara-up* VI-22, *vedante paramam guthyam*, 'the highest mystery in the Vedanta'. Afterwards it is used in the plural also, e.g., Kshurikopanishad, 10 (bibl. Ind. p. 210) *pundariketi Vedanteshu nigadyate*, ' it is called pundarika in the Vedantas" i.e., in the Khandogya and other Upanishads, as the commentator says, but not in the last books of each

Veda." More direct evidence on the point is that which is contained in the Gautama Dharma Sutras. In Chapter XIX verse 12 Gautama speaks of purification and says:

"The purificatory (texts are), the Upanishads, the Vedantas, the Samhita-text of all the Vedas" and so on. From this it is clear that at the date of Gautama the Upanishads were distinguished from Vedantas and were not acknowledged as a part of the Vedic literature. Hardatta in his commentaries says "those parts of the Aranyakas which are not. (Upanishads) are called Vedantas". This is unimpeachable proof that the Upanishads did not come within the range of the Vedic literature and were outside the canons.

This view is also supported by the use of the Veda in the Bhagwat Gita. The word Veda is used in the Bhagwat Gita at several places. And according to Mr. Bhat the word is used in a sense which shows that the author did not include the Upanishads in the term.

The subject matter of the Upanishads is not the same as that of the Vedas. This is also another reason why the Upanishads are not a part of the Vedas. What is the origin of the word Upanishad? The point is somewhat obscure. Most European scholars are agreed in deriving Upanishad from the root *sad*, to sit down, preceded by the two prepositions *ni* down and *upa* near, so that it would express the idea of session or assembly of public sitting down near their teacher to listen to his instructions. This is because in the Triandasesha, the word Upanishad is explained by *Samipasadana* as sitting down near a person.

But as Prof. Max Muller points out there are two objections to the acceptance of this derivation. Firstly such a word, it would seem, would have been applicable to any other portion of the Veda as well as to the chapters called Upanishad, and it has never been explained how its meaning came thus to be restricted. Secondly, the word Upanishad, in the sense of session or assembly has never been met with. Whenever the word occurs, it has the meaning of doctrine, secret doctrine, or is simply used as the title of the philosophic treatises which contain the secret doctrine.

There is another explanation proposed by Sankara in his commentary on the Taittiriya-Upanishad II, 9, noted by Prof. Max Muller. According to it the highest bliss is contained in the Upanishad (*param sreyo 'syam nishannam*). That is why it is called Upanishad. Regarding this, Prof. Max Muller says:

"The Aranyakas abound in such etymologies which probably were never intended as real as plays on words, helping, to account somehow for their meaning."

Prof. Max Muller however favours a derivation of the word ' Upanishad ' from the root *sad* to destroy, and meant knowledge which destroys ignorance,

the cause of Samsara, by revealing the knowledge of Brahmana as a means of salvation. Prof. Max Muller points out that this is the meaning which the native scholars have unanimously given to the word Upanishad.

If it be granted that the true derivation of the word ' Upanishad ' is what is suggested by Prof. Max Muller, then it would be one piece of evidence to show that the common belief of the Hindus is wrong and that the subject matter of the Vedas and the Upanishads are not complimentary but antagonistic. That the system of thought embodied in the Upanishads is repugnant to that of the Vedas is beyond doubt. A few citations from some of the Upanishads will suffice to show their opposition to the Vedas. The Mundaka Upanishad says:

" Brahma was produced the first among the gods, maker of the universe, the preserver of the world. He revealed to his eldest son Atharva, the science of Brahma the basis of all knowledge. (2) Atharvan of old declared to Angis this science, which Brahma had unfolded to him; and Angis, in turn, explained it to Satyavaha, descendant of Bharadvaja, who delivered this traditional lore, in succession, to Angiras. (3) Mahasala Saunaka, approaching Angiras with the proper formalities, inquired, 'What is that, O venerable sage, through the knowledge of which all this (universe) becomes known? (4) (Angiras) answered, 'Two sciences are to be known— this is what the sages versed in sacred knowledge declare—the superior and the inferior. (5) The inferior (consists of) the Rig Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda, the Atharva-Veda, accentuation, ritual grammar, commentary, prosody and astronomy. The superior science is that by which the imperishable is apprehended.'" by which of course he means the Upanishads.

The Chhandogya Upanishad says:

"(1) Narada approached Sanatkumara, saying, "Instruct me, venerable sage. He received for answer ' Approach me with (tell me) that which thou knowest; and I will declare to thee whatever more is to be learnt.' (2) Narada replied, 'I am instructed, venerable sage, in the Rig-veda, the Sama-veda, the Yajur-veda, the Atharvana (which is) the fourth, the Itihasas and Purana (which are) the fifth Veda of the Vedas, the rites of the pitris, arithmetic,, the knowledge of portents and of great periods, the art of reasoning, ethics, the science of the gods, the knowledge of Scripture, demonology, the science of war, the knowledge of the stars, the sciences of serpents and deities: this is what I have studied. (3) I, venerable man, know only the hymns (mantras); while I am ignorant of soul. But I have heard from reverend sages like thyself that 'the man who is acquainted with soul overpasses grief '. Now I, venerable man, am afflicted; but do thou transport me over my grief. Sanatkumara answered, ' That which thou hast studied is nothing but name. (4) The Rig-

veda is name: and so are the Yajur-veda, the Sama-veda, the Atharvana, which is the fourth, and the Itihasas and Puranas, the fifth Veda of the Vedas, etc., (all the other branches of knowledge are here enumerated just as above),—all these are but names: worship name. (5) He who worships name (with the persuasion that it is) Brahma, ranges as it were at will over all which that name comprehends: such is the prerogative of him who worships name (with the persuasion that it is) Brahma, 'Is there anything, venerable man' asked Narada, 'which is more than name?' 'There is,' replied, 'something which is more than name'. 'Tell it to me', rejoined Narada."

The Brahadaranyaka Upanishad says:

"In that (condition of profound slumber) a father is no father, a mother is no mother, the worlds are no worlds, the gods are no gods, and the Vedas are no Vedas, sacrifices are no sacrifices. In that condition a thief is no thief, a murderer of embryos is no murderer of embryos, a Pulkasa no Paulakasa, a Chandala no Chandala, a Sramana no Sramana, a devotee no devotee; the saint has then no relation, either of advantage or disadvantage, to merit or to sin; for he then crosses over all griefs of the heart."

This is what the Katha Upanishad has to say:

"This soul is not to be attained by instruction, nor by understanding, nor by much scripture. He is attainable by him whom he chooses. The soul chooses that man's body as his own abode".

"Although this soul is difficult to know, still it may easily be known by the use of proper means. This is what (the author) proceeds to say. This soul is not to be attained, known, by instruction, by the acknowledgement of many Vedas; nor by understanding, by the power of recollecting the contents of books; nor by much scripture alone. By what, then, is it to be attained? This he declares".

How great was the repugnance to the Upanishads and the philosophy contained in them will be realized if one takes note of the origin of the words Anuloma and Pratiloma which are usually applied to the marriage tie among the Hindus. Speaking of their origin Mr. Kane, points out that:

"These two words Anuloma and Pratiloma (as applied to marriage or progeny) hardly ever occur in the Vedic literature. In the Br. Up. (II. 1.5) and Kausitaki Br. Up. IV. 8. the word 'Pratiloma' is applied to the procedure adopted by a Brahmana of going to a Kshatriya for knowledge about '*Brahman*'. Anuloma means according to the heir that is in the natural order of things, Pratiloma means against the heir that is contrary to the natural order. Reading the observations of Mr. Kane in the light of the definition of the word Pratiloma it is obvious that the Upanishads far from being acknowledged as part of the Vedic literature were if not despised, held in low esteem by the

Vedic Brahmins. This is an additional piece of evidence which shows that there was a time when the relation between the Vedas and the Upanishads was of antagonism.

Another illustration of the attitude of the Vaidik Brahmins towards Brahmins who had studied the Upanishads may be given. It is to be found in the texts of the Dharma Sutras of Baudhayana. Baudhayana in his Dharma Sutras (ii. 8.3) says that at a Shradha ceremony a Rahasyavid is to be invited only if other Brahmins are not available. A Rahasyavid of course means a Brahmin versed in the Upanishads. The belief that the Vedas and the Upanishads are complimentary came into being is really a riddle.

#### RIDDLE NO. 9

#### HOW THE UPANISHADS CAME TO BE MADE SUBORDINATE TO THE VEDAS?

In the preceding chapter it was shown that originally the Upanishads were not a part of the Vedas and that the two in the matter of doctrine were opposed to each other. It is instructive to compare the later relations between the Vedas and the Upanishads. The later relations between them are best illustrated by the controversy between two philosophers, Jaimini and Badarayana.

Jaimini is the author of a work called the Mimamsa Sutras while Badarayana is the author of Brahma Sutras. Jaimini is an upholder of the Vedas and Badarayana is an upholder of the Upanishads.

The point of dispute was—Is it necessary to perform sacrifices ? The Vedas say ' yes ' and the Upanishads say ' no '.

The position of Jaimini is stated by Badarayana in his Sutras 2-7, and explained by Shankaracharya in his commentary. Jaimini contends that\*

" No one undertakes a sacrificial act unless he is conscious of the fact that he is different from the body and that after death he will go to heaven, where he will enjoy the result of his sacrifices. The Texts dealing with self-knowledge serve merely to enlighten the agent and so are subordinate to sacrificial acts."

In short Jaimini says that all that Vedanta teaches is that self is different from the body and outlive the body. Such a knowledge is not enough. The self must have the aspiration to go to heaven. But it can't go to heaven unless it performs Vedic sacrifices which is what his Karmakand teaches. Therefore his Karmakand is the only Salvation and that the Jnankand from that point of view is quite useless. For this Jaimini relies on the conduct of men who have believed in Vedanta:

---

***'Jaimini versus Badarayana ' was the title given to this chapter which***



***was later scored out. This is a 9-page typed MS with modifications in the first two pages by the author.—Ed.***

"Janaka, emperor of Videha performed a sacrifice in which gifts were freely distributed (Brih. 3.1.1). I am going to perform a sacrifice sirs (Chh. 5.11.5). Now both Janaka and Asvapati were knowers of the Self. If by this knowledge of the Self they had attained Liberation, there was no need for them to perform sacrifices. But the two texts quoted show that they did perform sacrifices. This proves that it is through sacrificial acts alone that one attains Liberation and not through the knowledge of the Self as the Vedantins hold."

Jaimini makes a positive assertion that the scriptures unmistakably declare "that knowledge of the Self stands in a subordinate relation to sacrificial acts ". Jaimini justifies it because he says " the two (knowledge and work) go together (with the departing soul to produce the results)." Jaimini refuses to give an independent position to Badarayana's *Jnanakanda*. He takes his stand on two grounds.

First: " Knowledge of the Self does not independently produce any result."

Second: According to the authority of the Vedas "Knowledge (of Self) stands in a subordinate relation to work." This is the position of Jaimini towards Badarayana's *Jnanakanda*.

What is the position of Badarayana towards Jaimini and his *Karma Kanda*? This is explained by Badarayana in Sutras 8 to 17.

The first position taken up by Badarayana is that the Self spoken of by Jaimini is the limited self i.e., the soul is to be distinguished from the Supreme soul and that the Supreme soul is recognized by the Scriptures.

The second position taken up by Badarayana is that the Vedas support both knowledge of Self as well as sacrifices.

The third position taken up by Badarayana is that only those who believe in the Vedas are required to perform sacrifices. But those who follow the Upanishads are not bound by that injunction. As Shankaracharya explains:

" Those who have read the Vedas and known about the sacrifices are entitled to perform work (sacrifices).' No work (sacrifice) is prescribed for those who have knowledge of the Self from the Upanishads. Such a knowledge is incompatible with work."

The fourth position taken up by Badarayana is that *Karmakanda* is optional to those who have attained Bramhanand. As Shankaracharya explains:

"That some have of their own accord given up all work. The point is that after knowledge some may choose to work to set an example to others, while others may give up all work. There is no binding on the knowers of the Self as regards work." His last and final position is that:

" Knowledge of the Self is antagonistic to all work and so cannot possibly be subsidiary to work"

And as evidence in support of it he relies on the scriptures which recognizes Sannyas as the fourth Ashram and relieves the Sannyasi from performing sacrifices prescribed by the *Karmakanda*.

Many such Sutras can be found in Badarayana indicating the attitude of the two scholars of thought towards each other. But the one given above is enough as it is so very typical. If one stops to consider the matter the position wears a strange appearance. Jaimini denounces Vedanta as a false Shastra, a snare and a delusion, something superficial, unnecessary and unsubstantial. What does Badarayana do in the face of this attack ? Does he denounce the *Karmakanda* of Jaimini as a false Shastra, a snare and a delusion, something superficial, unnecessary and unsubstantial as the Upanishads themselves did? No. He only defends his own Vedanta Shastra. But one would expect him to do more. One would expect from Badarayana a denunciation of the *Karmakanda* of Jaimini as a false religion. Badarayana shows no courage. On the contrary he is very apologetic. He concedes that Jaimini's *Karmakanda* is based on the scriptures and the scriptures have authority and sanctity which cannot be repudiated. All that he insists on is that his Vedanta doctrine is also true because it has also the support of the scriptures.

This is not all. What Badarayana does is to use the term Vedanta to cover two senses. He uses it so as to emphasize that the Upanishads do form a part of the Vedic literature. He uses it also to emphasize that Vedanta or the *Jnyanakanda* of the Upanishads is not opposed to the *Karmakanda* of the Vedas that the two are complimentary. Indeed this is the foundation on which Badarayana has raised the whole structure of his Vedanta Sutras.

This thesis of Badarayana—which underlies his Vedanta Sutras and according to which the Upanishads are a part of the Veda and there is no antagonism between the Vedas and Upanishads—is quite contrary to the tenor of the Upanishads and their relation to the Vedas. Badarayana's attitude is not easy to understand. But it is quite obvious that Badarayana's is a queer and a pathetic case of an opponent who begins his battle by admitting the validity of the premises of his adversary. Why did Badarayana concede to Jaimini on the question of infallibility of the Vedas which were opposed to the Upanishads? Why did he not stand for truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as expounded by the Upanishads? The Badarayana has in his Vedanta Sutras betrayed the Upanishads. Why did he do so?

**RIDDLE NO. 10**

## WHY DID THE BRAHMINS MAKE THE HINDU GODS FIGHT AGAINST ONE ANOTHER?

The Hindu theology regarding the world is based upon the doctrine of Trimurti. According to this doctrine the world undergoes three stages. It is created, preserved and destroyed. It is endless series of cycles which goes on without stoppage. The three functions which comprise the cycle are discharged by three Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Brahma creates the world, Vishnu -preserves and Mahesh destroys it for the purpose of creation. These gods are spoken of as forming what is called Trimurti. The doctrine of Trimurti postulates that three gods are co-equal in status and are engaged in functions which are contemporary and not competitive. They are friends and not rivals. They are allies of one another and not enemies.

When, however, one studies the literature which depicts the deeds of these three gods one finds a complete difference between the theory and the practice. The Gods far from being friends appear to be worse enemies of one another, competing for supremacy and sovereignty among themselves. A few illustrations from the Puranas will make the matter clear.

At one time Brahma appears to be the most supreme god as compared to Shiva and Vishnu. Brahma is said to be the creator of the universe—the first Prajapati. He is the progenitor of Shiva,\* and the master of Vishnu because if Vishnu became the preserver of the universe it was because Brahma commanded him to do it. So supreme was Brahma that he was the arbitrator in the conflicts that took place between Rudra and Narayan and between Krishna and Shiva.

Equally certain is the fact that at a subsequent stage Brahma came into conflict with Shiva and Vishnu and strangely enough lost his position and supremacy to his rivals. Two illustrations of his conflict with Vishnu may be given

---

***The original title was ' Gods at War '. This is a 25-page typed and corrected MS which includes three concluding pages handwritten by the author.—Ed.***

---

The first may well be the story of the Avatars. On the issue of the Avatars there is a rivalry between Brahma and Vishnu. The theory of Avatars or incarnation assumed by God to save humanity from a calamity began with Brahma. He was said to have assumed two Avatars (1) Boar and (2) Fish. But the followers of Vishnu refused to allow this. They asserted that these Avatars

were not the Avatars of Brahma but that they were the Avatars of Vishnu. Not only did they appropriate these Avatars of Vishnu they gave to Vishnu many more Avatars.

The Puranas have run riot with the *Avatars* of Vishnu and different Puranas have given different lists of Avatars as will be seen from the following:

#### AVATARS OF VISHNU

Sr. According No. to Hari Vamsa	According to Narayani Akhyan	According to Varaha Purana	According to Vayu Purana	According to Bhagwat Purana
1. Varaha	Hansa	Kurma	Narasin ha	Sanatkuma r
2. Narasinha	Kurma	Matsya	Vaman	Boar
3. Vaman	Matsya	Varaha	Varaha	
4. Parshuram	Varaha	Narasin ha	Kurma	Nara- Narayan
5. Rama	Narasin ha	Vaman	Sangra m	Kapila
6. Krishna	Vaman	Parshur am	Adivaka	Datlatraya
7.	Parshu ram	Rama	Tripurari	Jadna
8.	Rama	Krishna	Andhak arh	Rashabha
9.	Krishna	Buddha	Dhvaja	Prithi
10.	Kalkin	Kalkin	Varta	Matsya
11.			Halahal	Kurma
12.			Kolhaha	Dhanwanta ri
13.				Mohini
14.				Narasinha
15.				Vaman
16.				Parshuram
17.				Ved Vyas
18.				Naradeo
19.				Rama
20.				Krishna
21				Buddha
22.				Kalkin

The second story may well be the issue of the first born. It is related in the Skanda Purana. The story says that at one time Vishnu lay asleep on the bosom of Devi, a lotus arose from his navel, and its ascending flower soon reached the surface of the flood. Brahma sprang from flower, and looking round without any creature on the boundless expanse, imagined himself to be first born, and entitled to rank above all future beings; yet resolved to investigate deep and to ascertain whether any being existed in its universe who could controvert his preeminence, he glided down the stock of the lotus and finding Vishnu asleep, asked loudly who he was 'I am the first born' answered Vishnu; and when Brahma denied his preprogeniture, they engaged in battle, till Mahadeo pressed between them in great wrath, saying 'It is I who am truly the first born'. But I will resign my place to either of you, who shall be able to reach and behind the summit of my head, or the soles of my foot. Brahma instantly ascended but having fatigued himself to no purpose in the regions of immensity yet loath to abandon his claim, returned to Mahadeo declaring that he had attained and seen the crown of his head, and called as his witness the first born cow. For this union of pride and falsehood, the angry God Shiva ordained that no sacred rites should be performed to Brahma and that the mouth of cow should be defiled. When Vishnu returned, he acknowledged that he had not been able to see the feet of Mahadeo who then told him that he was the first born among the Gods, and should be raised above all. It was after this Mahadeo cut off the fifth head of Brahma who thus suffered the loss of his pride, his power and his influence.

According to this story Brahma's claim to be the first born was false. He was punished by Shiva for making it. Vishnu gets the right to call himself the first born. But that is allowed to him by the grace of Shiva. The followers of Brahma had their revenge on Vishnu for stealing what rightfully belonged to him with the help of Shiva. So they manufactured another legend according to which Vishnu emanated from Brahma's nostrils in the shape of a pig and grew naturally into a boar—a very mean explanation of Vishnu's Avatar as a boar.

After this Brahma tried to create enmity between Shiva and Vishnu evidently to better his own position. This story is told in the Ramayana. It says: "When King Dasaratha was returning to his capital, after taking leave of Janaka, the king of Mithila, whose daughter Sita had just been married to Rama, he was alarmed by the ill-omened sounds uttered by certain birds, which however were counteracted, as the sage Vasishtha assured the king, by the auspicious sign of his being perambulated by the wild animals of the forest. The alarming event indicated was the arrival of Parasurama, preceded by a hurricane which shook the earth and prostrated the trees, and by thick darkness which veiled the sun. He was fearful to behold, brilliant as fire, and

bore the axe and a bow on his shoulder. Being received with honour, which he accepted, he proceeded to say to Rama, the son of Dasaratha that he had heard of his prowess in breaking the bow produced by Janaka and had brought another which he asked Rama to bend, and to fit an arrow on the string; and if he succeeded in doing so, he (Parasurama) would offer to engage with him in single combat. Dasaratha is rendered anxious by this speech, and adopts a suppliant tone towards Parasurama, but the latter again addresses Rama, and says that the bow he had broken was Siva's, but the one he himself had now brought was Vishnu's. Two celestial bows, he proceeds, were made by Visvakarma of which one was given by the gods to Mahadeva, the other to Vishnu". The narrative then proceeds:

"The gods then all made a request to Brahma desiring to find out the strength and weakness of Sitikantha (Mahadeva) and Vishnu. Brahma, most excellent of the three learning the purpose of the gods, created enmity between the two. In this state of enmity a great and terrible fight ensued between Sitikantha and Vishnu each of whom was eager to conquer the other. Siva's bow of dreadful power was then relaxed and the three-eyed Mahadeva was arrested by a muttering. These two eminent deities being entreated by the assembled gods, rishis, and Charanas then became pacified. Seeing that the bow of Siva had been relaxed by the prowess of Vishnu, the gods and rishis esteemed Vishnu to be superior." Thus Brahma managed to avenge the wrong done to him by

Mahadeo.

Even this stratagem did not avail Brahma to maintain his position against Vishnu. Brahma lost his position so completely to Vishnu that Vishnu who at one time was at the command of Brahma became the creator Of Brahma.

In his contest with Shiva for supremacy Brahma suffered equal defeat. Here again, the position became completely inverted. Instead of being created by Brahma, Shiva became the creator of Brahma. Brahma lost the power of giving salvation. The god who could give salvation was Shiva and Brahma became no more than a common devotee worshipping Shiva and his Linga in the hope of getting salvation. He was reduced to the position of a servant of Shiva doing the work of charioteer of Shiva.

Ultimately Brahma was knocked out of the field of worship on a charge of having committed adultery with his own daughter. The charge is set out in the Bhagwat Purana in the following terms:

"We have heard, O Kshatriya, that Swayambhu (Brahma) had a passion for Vach, his slender and enchanting daughter, who had no passion for him. The Munis, his sons, headed by Marichi, seeing their father bent upon wickedness, admonished him with affection; 'This is such a thing as has not

been done by those before you, nor will those after you do it,— that you, being the lord, should sexually approach your daughter, not restraining your passion. This, O preceptor of the world, is not a laudable deed even in glorious personages, through limitation of whose actions men attain felicity. Glory to that divine being (Vishnu) who by his own lustre revealed this (universe) which abides in himself, he must maintain 'righteousness'. Seeing his sons, the Prajapatis, thus speaking before him the lord of the Prajapatis (Brahma) was ashamed, and abandoned his body. This dreadful body the regions received and it is known as foggy darkness."

The result of this degrading and defamatory attacks on Brahma was to damn him completely. No wonder that his cult disappeared from the face of India leaving him a nominal and theoretical member of the Trimurti.

After Brahma was driven out of the field there remained in the field Shiva and Vishnu. The two however were never at peace. The rivalry and antagonism between the two is continuous.

The Puranas are full of propaganda and counter-propaganda carried on by the Brahmins, protagonists of Shiva and Vishnu. How well matched the propaganda and counter-propaganda was, can be seen from the following few illustrations:

Vishnu is connected with the Vedic God Sun. The worshippers of Shiva connect him with Agni. The motive was that if Vishnu has a Vedic origin Shiva must also have Vedic origin as well. One cannot be inferior to the other in the matter of nobility of origin.

Shiva must be greater than Vishnu and Vishnu must not be less than Shiva. Vishnu has thousand names. So Shiva must have thousand names and he has them.

Vishnu has his emblems. They are four. So Shiva must have them and he has them. They are (1) flowing gauges, (2) Chandra (moon), (3) Shesh (snake) and (4) *Jata* (walled hair). The only point on which Shiva did not compete with Vishnu was the matter of *Avatars*. The reason is not that there was no desire to compete but that philosophically there was an impediment in the way of Shiva taking *Avatars*. The Saivas and Vaisnavas differed fundamentally in their conceptions of immortal bliss. As has been pointed out by Mr. Ayyer:

"To the Saiva the goal to be reached was final liberation from all fetters, bodily and mental, by their total annihilation. Hence he conceived of Rudra as the inextinguishable, one who could never be destroyed, but who extinguished or destroyed everything else. That was why Rudra came to be called the Destroyer. In the final stage of the spiritual development of an individual, there ought to be no separateness at all from the supreme Shiva.

He ought to transcend his body and mind, pleasure and pain, and all opposites or dualities. He should attain union or Sayujya with Shiva in which condition he would not be able to regard himself as separate from Shiva. Till he reached that stage, he was imperfect, however pure he might be, however eligible he might be, for the highest state of Sayujya: for, those who were eligible had attained only the subordinate stages of Salokya, Samipya and Sarupya. That was also the reason why the doctrine of Avatars did not appeal to the Saiva. God as an Avatar was only a limited being, one who had the capacity perhaps, of releasing himself from his fetters but not one without fetters. The Vaisnava believed differently. He had also an equally clear conception of the highest state that could be reached, and that ought to be reached. But there was, according to him, nothing appealing in the idea of losing one's own individuality totally. One should be united with the supreme, and yet be conscious of the union. He should be united with the universe which again should be regarded as the other aspect of the supreme imperishable being. He was not, in other words, for the extinction of the universe as if it were something separate and distinct from the Supreme Purusha. He was rather in favour of the preservation of the universe which was neither more nor less than the manifestation of the Purusha so manifested. That was the reason why Vishnu was given the name of the Preserver. After all, it is but a difference in the way in which the truth is perceived or viewed. The Saiva viewed the universe as an object of pain and misery—as *Pasha* or fetters (and one bound by it to be *Pasu*) which had to be broken and destroyed. The Vaisnava regarded it as evidencing the greatness of the Purusha and so to be preserved. The Saiva, with his superior pessimism (if it could be so called) was not likely to respect the Dharma Shastras, the Artha Shastras and other scriptures all of which were framed with the purpose of establishing orderliness in the world, inevitable for its welfare. He was bound to be a non-conformist, disdaining rules and conventions. Ideas of caste rigidity would be repugnant to the highly-evolved Saiva who would at best tolerate such

notions in others who had not reached his own stage of development. He would pay respect to and cultivate the society of only such people, to whatever caste they might belong, as were eligible for Samipya, Salokya, Sarupya and Sayujya, with Siva. The Vaisnava, on the other hand, was more concerned with the preservation of all rules and regulations which would have the effect of promoting peace and happiness in the world. If 'Dharma' perished, the world would perish too, and since the world ought not to perish, for it was a manifestation of the glory of the cosmic Purusha, his duty consisted in doing everything he could for preserving the Dharma. If things went beyond



his control he was sure Vishnu would take the matter up himself; for he would come into the world as an Avatar. But when Vishnu did come upon the earth, it would be to destroy the wicked, that is, all those who were instrumental in upsetting the Dharma, and so it was necessary that one should be careful not to deserve that terrible punishment from Vishnu. Hence, the Agamas or rules laid down for the guidance of Siva bhaktas did not emphasise caste, and were concerned only with the duties of *bhaktas* in general, the proper fulfilment of which would render them fit to gain God vision, and ultimately union with Siva. These were regarded as impure by the others because they were subversive of caste ideas, and as stated before, they were not alluded to in the orthodox scriptures."

In the performance of deeds of glory the propaganda in favour of Shiva is fully, matched by counter-propaganda in favour of Vishnu. One illustration of this is the story regarding the origin of the holy river Ganges. The devotees of Shiva attribute its origin to Shiva. They take its origin from Shiva's hair. But the Vaishnavas will not allow it. They have manufactured another legend. According to the Vaishnavite legend the blessed and the blessing river flowed originally out of Vaikunth (the abode of Vishnu) from the foot of Vishnu, and descending upon Kailasa fell on the head of Shiva. There is a two-fold suggestion in the legend. In the first place Shiva is not the source of the Ganges. In the second place Shiva is lower than Vishnu and receives on his head water which flows from the foot of Vishnu.

Another illustration is furnished by the story which relates to the churning of the oceans by the Devas and the Asuras. They used the Mandara mountain as the churning rod and mighty serpent Shesha as a rope to whirl the mountain. The earth began to shake and people became afraid that the world was coming to an end. Vishnu took the Avatar of Kurma (Tortoise) and held the earth on his back and prevented the earth from shaking while the churning was going on.

This story is told in glorification of Vishnu. To this the Shaivites add a supplement. According to this supplement the churning brought out fourteen articles from the depth of the ocean which are called fourteen jewels. Among these fourteen a deadly poison was one. This deadly poison would have destroyed the earth unless somebody was prepared to drink it. Shiva was the only person who came forward to drink it. The suggestion is that Vishnu's act was foolish in allowing the rivals—the Gods and Demons—to bring out this deadly poison. Glory to Shiva for he drank it and saved the world from the evil consequences of the folly of Vishnu.

Third illustration is an attempt to show that Vishnu is a fool and that it is Shiva who with his greater wisdom and greater power saves Vishnu from his

folly. It is the story of Akrurasura. Akrur was a demon with the face of a bear, who, nevertheless, was continuously reading the Vedas and performing acts of devotion. Vishnu was greatly pleased and promised him any boon that he would care to ask. Akrurasura requested that no creature, then existing in three worlds, might have power to deprive him of life, and Vishnu complied with his request; but the demon became so insolent that the Devatas, whom he oppressed, were obliged to conceal themselves, and he assumed the dominion of the world ; Vishnu was then sitting on a bank of the Kali, greatly disquieted by the malignant ingratitude of the demon; and his wrath being kindled, a shape, which never before had existed, sprang from his eyes. It was Mahadeva, in his destructive character, who dispelled in a moment the anxiety of the Vishnu.

This is countered by the story of Bhasmasura intended to show that Shiva was a fool and Vishnu saved him from his folly. Bhasmasura having propitiated Shiva asked for a boon. The boon was to be the power to burn any one on whose head Bhasmasura laid his hands. Shiva granted the boon. Bhasmasura tried to use his boon power against Shiva himself. Shiva became terrified and ran to Vishnu for help. Vishnu promised to help him. Vishnu took the form of a beautiful woman and went to Bhasmasura who became completely enamoured of her. Vishnu asked Bhasmasura to agree to obey him in everything as a condition of surrender. Bhasmasura agreed. Vishnu then asked him to place his hands on his own head which Bhasmasura did with the result that Bhasmasura died and Vishnu got the credit of saving Shiva from the consequences of his folly.

"Is Isa (Mahadeva) the Cause of causes for any other reasons? We have not heard that the linga (male organ) of any other person is worshipped by the gods. Declare, if thou hast heard, what other being's linga except that of Mahesvara is now worshipped, or has formerly been worshipped, by the gods? He whose linga Brahma and Vishnu, and thou (Indra), with the deities, continually worship, is therefore then most eminent. Since children bear neither the mark of the lotus (Brahma's), nor of the discus (Vishnu's), nor of the thunderbolt (Indra's), but are marked with the male and the female organs,—therefore offspring is derived from Mahesvara. All women produced from the nature of Devi as their cause, are marked with the female organ, and all males are manifestly marked with the linga of Hara. He who asserts any other cause than Isvara (Mahadeva) or (affirms) that there is any (female) not marked by Devi in the three worlds, including all things movable or immovable, let that fool be thrust out. Know everything which is male to be Isara. and all that is female to be Uma: for this whole world, movable and immovable, is pervaded by (these) two bodies."

The Greek Philosopher Zenophanes insists that polytheism or plurality of Gods is inconceivable and contradictory. That the only true doctrine was monotheism. Considered from a philosophical point of view, Zenophanes might be right. But from the historical point of view both are natural. Monotheism is natural where society is a single community. Where society is a federation of many communities polytheism is both natural and inevitable. Because every ancient community consisted not merely of men but of men and its Gods it was impossible for the various communities to merge and coalesce except on one condition that its God is also accepted by the rest. This is how polytheism has grown.

Consequently the existence of many Gods among the Hindus is quite understandable because the Hindu Society has been formed by the conglomeration of many tribes and many communities each of whom had their own separate Gods. What strikes one as a strange phenomenon is the sight of the Hindu Gods, struggling one against the other, their combats and feuds and the ascriptions by one God to the other, all things that are a shame and disgrace to common mortals. This is what requires explanation.

#### **RIDDLE NO. 11**

#### **WHY DID THE BRAHMINS MAKE THE HINDU GODS SUFFER TO RISE AND FALL?**

The Hindus are accused of idolatry. But there is nothing wrong in idolatry. Making an idol is nothing more than having a photograph of the deity and if there can be no objection to keeping a photograph what objection can there be to having an image. Real objection to Hindu idolatry is that it is not mere photography, not mere production of an image. It is more than that. The Hindu idol is a living being and is endowed with all the functions of a human being. A Hindu idol is given life by means of a ceremony called Pranaprathista. The Buddhists also are idolatrous in as much as they too worship Buddha's idol. But the idol they worship is only a photograph, a mere image. There is no soul in it. Why the Brahmins endowed the Hindu Gods with souls and made them living beings opens out an inquiry which is bound to be revealing. But this inquiry is outside the scope of this Chapter.

The second charge generally levelled against the Hindus is that they are polytheists i.e., they worship many Gods. Here again the Hindus are not the only people who are guilty of the practice of Polytheism. Other communities have also been known to have practised polytheism. To mention only two. The Romans and the Greeks were essentially polytheists. They too worshipped many Gods. There is therefore no force in this charge.

The real charge which can be levelled against the Hindus most people seem to have missed. That charge is that the Hindus are never steadfast in their devotion to their Gods. There is no such thing as

***This is a 43-page typed MS having corrections and modifications in the handwriting of the author. The concluding para, however, is written in pen by the author himself. The original title on the Chapter was ' The Rise and Fall of the Gods '. This title was scored out in blue pencil, which was normally used by the author for scoring out the matter.—Ed.***

loyalty or attachment or faith in one God. In the history of Hindu Gods one finds it a very common experience that some Gods have been worshipped for a time and subsequently their worship has been abandoned and the Gods themselves have been thrown on the scrap-heap. Quite new Gods are adopted and their worship goes with an intensity of devotion which is full and overflowing. Again the new Gods are abandoned and are replaced by a fresh crop of new Gods. So the cycle goes on. In this way the Hindu Gods are always undergoing rise and fall—a phenomenon which is unknown in the history of any other community in the world.

The statement that the Hindus treat their Gods with such levity may not be accepted without demur. Some evidence on this point is therefore necessary. Fortunately there is abundance of it. At present the Hindus worship four Gods (1) Shiva, (2) Vishnu, (3) Rama and (4) Krishna. The question that one has to consider is: are these the only Gods the Hindus have worshipped from the beginning?

The Hindu Pantheon has the largest number of inmates. The Pantheon of no religion can rival it in point of population. At the time of the Rig-Veda the number of its inmates was colossal. At two places the Rig-Veda speaks of three thousand three hundred and nine Gods. For some reasons, which it is not possible for us now to know, this number came to be reduced to thirty-three. This is a considerable reduction. Nevertheless with thirty three, the Hindu Pantheon remains the largest.

The composition of this group of thirty-three Gods is explained by the Satapatha Brahmana as made up of 8 Vasus, 11 Rudras and 12 Adityas, together with Dyasus and Prithvi (heaven and earth).

Of greater importance than the question of numbers is the question of their relative rank. Was there any distinction between the 33 Gods in point of their rank ? There is a verse in the Rig-Veda which seems to suggest that these thirty-three Gods were divided for purposes of honours and precedence into two classes, one being great and small and the other being young and old. This view seems to be against an earlier view also contained in the Rig-Veda.

The old rule says: " None of you O! Gods! is small or young: You are all great ". This is also the conclusion of Prof. Max Muller:

"When these individual gods are invoked, they are not conceived as limited by the power of others, as superior or inferior in rank. Each god is to the mind of the supplicants as good as all the gods. He is felt, at the time, as a real divinity, as supreme and absolute, in spite of the necessary limitations which, to our mind, a plurality of gods must entail on every single god. All the rest disappear for a moment from the vision of the poet, and he only, who is to fulfil their desires stands in full light before the eyes of the worshippers" "Nowhere is any of the Gods represented as the slave of others".

This is of course true only for a time. A change seems to have come in the old angle of vision towards the Gods. For one finds numerous hymns of the Veda in which some gods are represented as supreme and absolute.

In the first hymn of the second Mandala, Agni is called the ruler of the Universe, the Lord of men, the wise king, the father, the brother, the son, the friend of men; nay, all the powers and names of the others are distinctly ascribed to Agni.

Then a second god came to be elevated above Agni. He is Indra. Indra is spoken of as the strongest god in the hymns as well as in the Brahmanas, and the burden of one of the songs of the Tenth Book is: *Visvasmad Indra Uttarah* 'Indra is greater than all'.

Then a third god is raised to the highest level. He is Soma. Of Soma, it is said that he was born great and that he conquers every one. He is called the king of the world, he has the power to prolong the life of men, and in one verse he is called the maker of heaven, and earth, of Agni, of Surya, of Indra and of Vishnu. Then Soma was forgotten and a fourth God was elevated. He is Varuna. Varuna was made the highest of all Gods. For what more could human language do than to express the idea of a divine and supreme power, than what the Vedic poet says of Varuna; ' Thou art Lord of all, of heaven, and earth ' or, as is said in another hymn (ii. 27, 10), 'Thou art the king of all; of those who are gods, and of those who are men.'

From this evidence it is clear that out of the 33 Vedic Gods four Gods, Agni, Indra, Soma and Varuna had emerged as the principal Gods. Not that other gods had ceased to be gods. But these four had become elevated above the rest. At a later stage a change seems to have taken place at the time of the Satapatha Brahmana in the relative position of the different gods. Soma and Varuna had lost their places as the principal gods while Agni and Indra had retained their positions. A new god has emerged. He is Surya. The result is that instead of Agni, Indra, Soma and Varuna; Agni, Indra and Surya became

the principal gods. This is evident from the Satapatha Brahmana which says:

"Originally the gods were all alike, all pure. Of them being all alike, all pure, three desired, 'May we become superior' viz., Agni, Indra and Surya (the sun).

"2. ....

"3. Originally there was not in Agni the same flame, as this flame which is (now) in him. He desired : ' May this flame be in me '.He saw this grahs, he took it: and hence there became this flame in him.

4. Originally there was not in Indra the same vigour, etc. (as in para 3).

5. Originally there was not in Surya the same lustre etc." For how long these three Gods continued to hold their places of superiority over the rest it is difficult to say. But that at a later stage a change in the scene has taken place is beyond doubt. This is evident by a reference to the Chula-Niddessa. The Chula Niddessa is a treatise which belongs to the Buddhist literature. Its approximate date is.... *{left incomplete}*.

The Chula-Niddessa gives a list of sects which were then prevalent in India. Classified on the basis of creeds and cults. They may be listed as follows: 1.

#### CREEDS

Sr.	Name of the Sect	No.
1.	Ajivika Shravaka	Ajivika
2.	Nigatta Shravakas	Nigantha
3.	Jatil Shravakas	Jatila
4.	Parivrajaka Shravakas	Parivrajaka
5.	Avarudha Shravakas	Avarudhaka

#### II. CULTS

Sr. Name of the Sect	No.	The deity which is worshipped
1.	Hasti Vratikas	Hasti
2.	Ashva Vratikas	Ashva
3.	Go Vratikas	Go
4.	Kukur Vratikas	Kukku
5.	Kaka Vratikas	Kaka
6.	Vosudeo Vratikas	Vasudeo
7.	Baldeo Vratikas	Baldeo
8.	Puma Bhadra Vratikas	Puma Bhadra
9.	Mani Bhadra Vratikas	Mani Bhadra
10.	Agni Vratikas	Agni
11.	Naga Vratikas	Naga

12. Suparna Vratikas	Suparna
13. Yaksha Vratikas	Yaksha
14. Asura Vratikas	Asura
15. Gandharva Vratikas	Gandharva
16. Maharaja Vratikas	Maharaja
17. Chandra Vratikas	Chandra
18. Surya Vratikas	Surya
19. Indra Vratikas	Indra
20. Brahma Vratikas	Brahma
21. Deva Vratikas	Deva
22. Deesha Vratikas	Deesha

Comparing the position as it stood at the time of the Satapatha Brahmana with that arising from the Chula-Niddessa the following propositions may be said to be well-established: (1) Firstly, that the worship of Agni, Surya and Indra continued up to the time of the Chula Niddessa. (2) Secondly, the Cults of Agni, Surya and Indra although they had not ceased, had lost their places of supremacy. Others and quite a number of cults had come into being as rivals and had won the affection of the people. (3) Thirdly, of the new cults there are two which later on became very prominent. They are the cults of Vasudeo (i.e. Krishna) and Brahma and (4) Fourthly the cults of Vishnu, Shiva and Rama had not come into being.

What is the present position as compared with that found in the Chula-Niddessa? Here again, three propositions are well-established. *First* : the cults of Agni, Indra, Brahma and Surya have disappeared. *Second*: Krishna has retained his position. *Three*: The cults of Vishnu, Shiva and Rama are new cults which have come into existence since the time of the Chula-Niddessa. Given this situation it raises three questions for considerations: *One* is why have the old cults of Agni, Indra, Brahma and Surya disappeared ? Why was the worship of these Gods abandoned ? *Second* is what are the circumstances that gave rise to the new cults of Krishna, Rama, Shiva and Vishnu. Third what is the relative position of these new Gods, Krishna, Rama, Shiva and Vishnu ?

For the first question we can find no answer. The Brahmanic literature gives us no clue whatsoever as to why the Brahmins abandoned the worship of Agni, Indra, Surya and Brahma. There is some explanation as to why the cult of Brahma disappeared. It rests in a charge which is found to be levelled in the Brahmanic literature against Brahma. The charge is that he committed rape on his own daughter and hereby made himself unworthy of worship and devotion. Whatever be the truth in the charge it could not be regarded as sufficient to account for the abandonment of Brahma and for two reasons. In

the first place, in that age such conduct was not unusual. In the second place, Krishna was guilty of greater immoralities than were charged to Brahma and yet they continued to worship him.

While there is something to speculate about the abandonment of Brahma there is nothing to account for the abandonment of the others. The disappearance of Agni, Indra, Surya and Brahma is thus a mystery. This is no place to solve this mystery. It is enough to say that the *Gods* of the Hindus had ceased to be Gods—a terrible thing.

The second question is also enveloped in mystery. Brahmanic literature, to account for the importance of the cults of these new Gods, Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva and Rama, is full and overflowing. But there is nothing in the Brahmanic literature to account for the rise of these new Gods. Why these new Gods were brought into action is thus a mystery. The mystery however deepens when one finds that some of the new Gods were definitely anti-Vedic. Let us take the case of Shiva. That Shiva was originally an Anti-Vedic God is abundantly clear. The following two incidents recorded in the Bhagvata Purana (and also in the Mahabharata) throw a flood of light on the subject. The first incident shows how enmity arose between Shiva and his father-in-law Daksha. It appears that the Gods and Rishis were assembled at a sacrifice celebrated by the Prajapatis. On the entrance of Daksha, all the personages who were present, rose to salute him, except Brahma and Shiva. Daksha, after making his obeisance to Brahma, sat down by his command; but was offended at the treatment he received from Shiva. This is how he addressed Shiva:

" Beholding Mrida (Shiva) previously seated, Daksha did not brook his want of respect; and looking at him obliquely with his eyes, as if consuming him, thus spake: ' Hear me, ye Brahman rishis, with the Gods and the Agnis, While I, neither from ignorance nor from passion, describe what is the practice of virtuous persons. But this shameless being (Siva) detracts from the reputation of the guardians of the world, he by whom, stubborn as he is, the course pursued by the good is transgressed. He assumed the position of my disciple, inasmuch as, like a virtuous person, in the face of Brahmans and of fire, he took the hand of my daughter, who resembled Savitri. This monkey-eyed (god), after having taken of (my) fawn-eyed (daughter), has not even by word shown suitable respect to me whom he ought to have risen and saluted. Though unwilling, I yet gave my daughter to this impure and proud abolisher of rites and demolisher of barriers, like the word of the Veda to a Sudra. He roams about in dreadful cemeteries, attended by hosts of ghosts and spirits, like a madman, naked, with dishevelled hair, laughing, weeping, bathed in the ashes of funeral piles, wearing a garland of dead men's (skulls), and



ornaments of human bones, pretending to be Siva (auspicious) but in reality Asiva (in-auspicious), insane, beloved by the insane the lord of Pramathas and Bhutas (spirits), beings whose nature is essentially darkness. To this wicked-hearted lord of the infuriate, whose purity has perished. I have, alas ! given my virtuous daughter, at the instigation of Brahma'. Having thus reviled Girisa (Siva), who did not oppose him, Daksha having then touched water, incensed, began to curse him (thus): 'Let this Bhava (Siva), lowest of the gods, never, at the worship of the gods, receive any portion along with the gods Indra, Upendra (Vishnu), and others.' Having delivered his malediction, Daksha departed." The enmity between the father-in-law and son-in-law continues. Daksha being elevated by Brahma to the rank of the Chief of the Prajapatis decided to perform a great Sacrifice called Vrihaspatisava. Seeing the other Gods with their wives going to this Sacrifice, Parvati pressed her husband, Shiva, to accompany her thither. He refers to the insults which he had received from her father, and advises her not to go. She, however (sect. 4), being anxious to see her relatives, disregards his warning and goes: but being sighted by her father, Daksha, she reproaches him for his hostility to her husband, and threatens to abandon the corporeal frame by which she was connected with her parent. She then voluntarily gives up the ghost. Seeing this, Shiva's attendants, who had followed her, rush on Daksha to kill him. Bhrigu, however, throws an oblation into the southern fire, pronouncing a Yajus text suited to destroy the destroyers of sacrifice (*yajna-ghnena yajusha dakshinagnau juhavaha*). A troop of Ribhus in consequence spring up, who put Shiva's followers to flight. Shiva is filled with wrath when he hears of the death of Sati (sect. 5). From a lock of his hair, which he tore out, a gigantic demon arose, whom he commended to destroy Daksha and his sacrifice. This demon proceeds with a troop of Shiva's followers, and they all execute the mandate. How they executed the mandate is described in the Bhagvat Purana in the following terms:

" Some broke the sacrificial vessels, others destroyed the fires, others made water in the ponds, others cut the boundary-cords of the sacrificial ground: others assaulted the Munis, others reviled their wives: others seized the gods who were near, and those who had fled. . . . 19. The divine Bhava (Siva) plucked out the beard of Bhrigu, who was offering oblations with a ladle in his hand. and who had laughed in the assembly, showing his beard. He also tore out the eyes of Bhaga, whom in his wrath he had felled to the ground, and who, when in the assembly, had made a sign to (Daksha when) cursing (Siva) He moreover knocked out the teeth of Pushan (as Bala did the king of Kalinga's). who (Pushan) had laughed, showing his teeth, when the great god was being cursed. Tryambaka (Siva, or Virabhadra, according to

the commentator) then cuts off the head of Daksha, but not without some difficulty. The gods report all that had passed to Svayambhu (Brahma), who, with Vishnu, had not been present (sect. 6). Brahma advises the gods to propitiate Siva, whom they had wrongfully excluded from a share in the sacrifice. The deities, headed by Aja (Brahma), accordingly proceed to Kailasa. when they see Siva " bearing the linga desired by devotees, ashes a staff, a tuft of hair. an antelope's skin. and a digit of the moon, his body shining like an evening cloud ". Brahma addresses Mahadeva "as the eternal Brahma, the lord of Sakti and Siva, who are respectively the womb and the seed of the universe, who. in sport, like a spider, forms all things from Sakti and Siva, who are consubstantial with himself, and preserves and reabsorbs them" (A similar supremacy is ascribed to Vishnu in section 7). Brahma adds that it was this great being who had instituted sacrifice, and all the regulations which Brahmans devoutly observe and entreat him. who is beyond all illusion, to have mercy on those who, overcome by its influence, had wrongly attached importance to ceremonial works, and to restore the sacrifice of Daksha, at which a share had been refused to him by evil priests. Mahadeva partly relents (sect. 7)"

There can be no better evidence to prove that Shiva was an anti-vedic God than his destruction of Daksha's Yajna.

Now let us take Krishna.

There are four persons who go by the name *Krishna*. One Krishna is the son of Satyavati and father of Dhrtarashtra, Pandu and Vidur. Second Krishna is the brother of Subhadra and friend of Arjuna. Third Krishna is the son of Vasudeva and Devaki and was resident of Mathura. Fourth Krishna is the one brought up by Nanda and Yeshoda at Gokul and it was he who killed Shishupal. If the Krishna of the Krishna cult is the same as the Krishna son of Devaki there can be no doubt that Krishna originally also was anti-Vedic. From the Chhandogya Upanishad it appears that he was a pupil of Ghora Angiras. What did Ghora Angiras teach him? This is what the Chhandogya Upanishad says on the subject:

"Ghora, the descendant of Angiras, having declared this (the preceding mystical lore) to Krishna the son of Devaki, said to him that (which, when he heard) he became free from thirst (i.e. desire), viz., ' let a man at the time of his death have recourse to these three texts, ' Thou art the undecaying, thou art the imperishable, thou art the subtle principle of breath '. The commentator on this text of the Upanishad explains:

"A person, Ghora by name, and an Angirasa by family, having declared this doctrine of sacrifice to Krishna the son of Devaki, his pupil, then said etc. The connexion of the last word 'said', is with the words which occur some way

below, 'these three etc.. And having heard this doctrine he became free from desire for any "kinds of knowledge. In this manner he praises this knowledge of the Purusha-sacrifice by saying that it was so distinguished that it destroyed all thirst in Krishna, the son of Devaki, for any other knowledge. He now tells us that Ghora Angirasa said after declaring this knowledge to Krishna. It was this: 'Let him who knows the aforesaid sacrifice, at the time of his death have recourse to, mutter, these three texts, *pranasamsitam* means, 'thou art the very minute, and subtle principle of breath."

Obviously the doctrine taught by Ghora Angirasa to Krishna was opposed to the Vedas and the Vedic sacrifices as a means of spiritual salvation. On the contrary Vishnu is a Vedic God. Yet his cult is established much later than that of Shiva. Why there has been so much neglect of Vishnu it is difficult to understand.

Similarly Rama though not anti-vedic is unknown to the Vedas. What was the necessity of starting his cult and that too at so late a stage in the history of the country?

We may now take up the third question—namely what is the relative position of these new Gods to the old Pauranic Gods.

The rise and fall of Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva has already been told in a previous chapter called *Gods at War*. Whatever happened, the struggle for place and power was confined to these three Gods. They were not dragged below any other. But a time came when they were placed below the Devi by name Shri. How this happened is told in the Devi Bhagwat. The Devi Bhagwat says that a Devi by name *Shri* created the whole world and that it is this Goddess who created Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva! The Devi Bhagwat goes on to state that the Devi desired to rub her palms. The rubbing of palms produced a blister. Out of this blister was born Bramha. When Bramha was born the Devi asked him to marry her. Bramha refused saying she was his mother. The Devi got angry and burned Bramha alive by her wrath and Bramha was reduced to ashes then and there. Devi rubbed her palms a second time and had a second blister. Out of this second blister a second son was born. This was Vishnu. The Devi asked Vishnu to marry her. Vishnu declined saying that she was his mother. Devi got angry and burned down Vishnu to ashes. Devi rubbed her palms a third time and had a third blister. Out of this third blister was born a third son. He was Shiva. The Devi asked Shiva to marry her. Shiva replied: ' I will, provided you assume another body '. Devi agreed. Just then Shiva's eyes fell on the two piles of ashes. Devi replied ' they are the ashes of his two brothers and that she burnt them because they refused to marry her. ' On this Shiva said, ' How can I alone marry? You create two other women so that we all three can marry '. The devi

did as she was told and the three Gods were married to the Devi and her female creations. There are two points in the story. One is that even in doing evil Shiva did not wish to appear more sinning than Bramha and Vishnu for fear that he may appear more degraded than his other two competitors. The more important point however is that Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva had fallen in rank and had become the creatures of the Devi.

Having dealt with the rise and fall of Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva, there remains the vicissitudes in the cults of the two new Gods, Krishna and Rama.

Obviously there is a certain amount of artificiality in the cult of Krishna as compared with the cult of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh were born gods. Krishna was a man who was raised to godhood. It is probably to confer godhood on him that the theory was invented that he was the incarnation of Vishnu. But even then his godhood remained imperfect because he was regarded to be only a partial avatar of Vishnu largely because of his debaucheries with the *gopis* which would have been inexcusable if he had been a full and perfect *avatar* of Vishnu.

Notwithstanding this humble beginning Krishna became elevated to the position of a supreme God above all others. How great a God he became can be seen by a reference to Chapter X and XIV of the Bhagvat Geeta. In these Chapters Krishna says:

"Well then, O best of the Kauravas I will state to you my own divine emanations; but (only) the chief (ones) for there is no end to the extent of my (emanations). I am the self. O Gudakesa seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning and the middle and the end also of all beings. I am Vishnu among the Adityas, the beaming Sun among the shining (bodies); I am Marichi among the Maruts, and the Moon among the lunar mansions. Among the Vedas, I am the Sama-veda. I am Indra among the Gods. And I am mind among the senses. I am consciousness in (living) beings. And I am Shankara among the Rudras, the Lord of Wealth among Yakshas and Rakshasas. And I am *fire* among the Vasus, and Meru among the high-topped (mountains). And know me, O Arjuna to be Brihaspati, the chief among domestic priests. I am Skanda among generals. I am the ocean among reservoirs of water. I am Bhrigu among the great sages. I am the Single syllable (Om) among words. Among sacrifices I am the *Gapa* sacrifice; the Himalaya among the firmly fixed (mountains); the Asvattha among all trees, and Narada among divine sages; Chitraratha among the heavenly *choristers*, the sage Kapila among the Siddhas. Among horses know me to be Uchhaissravas, brought forth by (the labour for) the nectar; and Airavata among the great elephants, and the ruler of men among men. I am the thunderbolt among weapons, the wish-giving (cow) among cows. And I am love which generates. Among serpents I

am Vasuki. Among Naga snakes I am Ananta; I am Varuna among aquatic beings. And I am Aryaman among the manes, and Yama among rulers. Among demons, too, I am Pralhada. I am the king of death (kala, time) among those that count.

"Among beasts I am the lord of beasts, and the son of Vinata among birds. I am the wind among those that blow. I am Rama among those that wield weapons. Among fishes I am Makara, and among streams the Janhavi. Of created things I am the beginning and the end and the middle also. O Arjuna, among sciences, I am the science of the Adhyatma, and I am the argument of controversialists. Among letters I am the letter A, and among the group of compounds the copulative compound. I myself am time inexhaustible and I the creator whose faces are in all directions. I am death who seizes all, and the source of what is to be. And among females, fame, fortune, speech, memory, intellect, courage, forgiveness. Likewise among Saman hymns, I am the Brihat-saman, and I the Gayatri among metres. I am Margasirsha among the months, the spring among the seasons, of cheats, I am the game of dice; I am the glory of the glorious; I am victory. I am industry, I am the goodness of the good. I am Vasudeva among the descendants of Vrishni and Arjuna among the Pandvas. Among sages also, I am Vyasa; and among the discerning ones, I am the discerning Usanas. I am the rod of those that restrain, and the policy of those that desire victory. I am silence respecting secrets. I am the knowledge of those that have knowledge. And O Arjuna! I am also that which is the seed of all things. There is nothing movable or immovable which can exist without me."

" Know that glory (to be) mine which, dwelling in the Sun, lights up the whole world, or in the moon or fire. Entering the earth, I by my power support all things; and becoming the juicy moon, I nourish all herbs. I becoming the fire, and dwelling in the bodies of (all) creatures, and united with the upward and downward life-breaths cause digestion of the four-fold food. And I am placed in the heart of all."

" From me (come) memory, knowledge, and their removal; I alone am to be learnt from all the Vedas; I am the author of the Vedantas; and I alone know the Vedas. There are these two beings in the world, the destructible and the indestructible. The destructible (includes) all things. The unconcerned one is (what is) called the indestructible. But the being supreme is yet another, called the highest self, who as the inexhaustible lord, pervading the three worlds, supports (them). And since I transcend the destructible, and since I am higher also than the indestructible therefore am I celebrated in the world and in the Vedas as the best of things." It is therefore clear that so far as the Gita is concerned there is no God greater than Krishna. He is, Alla ho Akbar.

He is greater than all other Gods.

Let us now turn to the Mahabharata. What do we find ? We find a change in the position of Krishna. There is a rise and fall in his position. In the first place we find Krishna elevated above Shiva. Not only that, Shiva is made to admit and acknowledge the greatness of Krishna. Along with this we also find Krishna degraded to a rank below that of Shiva and is made to acknowledge the greatness of Shiva.

As a piece of evidence in support of the elevation of Krishna above Shiva the following passage from the *Anusasana-Parvan* is very illuminating:

"Superior even to Pitamaha (Bramha) is Hari, the eternal Purusha, Krishna, brilliant as gold, like the sun risen in a cloudless sky, ten-armed, of mighty force, slayer of the foes of the gods, marked with the *srivatsa*, Hrishikesa, adored by all the gods. Bramha is sprung from his belly and I (Mahadeva) from his head, the luminaries from the hair of his head, the gods, and Asuras from the hairs of his body, and the rishis as well as everlasting worlds, have been produced from his body. He is the manifest abode of Pitamaha, and of all the deities. He is the creator of this entire earth, the lord of the three worlds, and the destroyer of creatures, of the stationary and the moveable. He is manifestly the most eminent of the gods, the lord of the deities, the vexer of his foes. He is omniscient, intimately united (with all things), omnipresent facing in every direction, the supreme spirit, Hrishikesa all-pervading, the mighty Lord. There is none superior to him in the three worlds. The slayer of Madhu is eternal, renowned as Govinda. He, the conferer of honour, born to fulfil the purposes of the gods, and assuming a human body, will slay all the kings in battle. For all the hosts of the gods, destitute of Trivikrama (the god who strode thrice), are unable to effect the purposes of the gods, devoid of a leader. He is the leader of all creatures, and worshipped by all creatures.

" Of this lord of the gods, devoted to the purposes of the gods, who is Brahma, and is the constant refuge of gods and rishis, Brahma dwells within the body, abiding in his face, and all the gods are easily sheltered in his body. This god is lotus-eyed, the producer of Sri, dwelling together with Sri . . . For the welfare of the gods, Govinda shall arise in the family of the great Manu, possessed of eminent intelligence and (walking) in the excellent path of the Prajapati Manu, characterized by righteousness (Govinda's ancestors are then detailed). In this family, esteemed by Brahmans, of men renowned for valour, distinguished by good conduct and excellent qualities, priests, most pure, this sura, the most eminent of Kshatriya heroic, renewed, conferring honour, shall beget a son Anakadundubhi, the prolonger of his race, known as Vasudev to him shall be born a four-armed son, Vasudeva, liberal, a

benefactor of Brahmans, one with' 'Brahma, a lover of Brahmans."

" You the gods, should, as is fit, worship this deity, like the eternal Brahma, approaching him with reverential and excellent garlands of praise. For the divine and glorious Vasudev should be beheld by him who desires to see me and Brahma and Parent. In regard to this, I have no hesitation, that when he is seen I am seen, or the Parent (Brahma), the lord of the gods: know this ye whose wealth is austerity."

We shall now see how Krishna after having been elevated to the position being highest among the Gods is being degraded.

The Mahabharata is so full of incidents and occasions which demonstrate Krishna's inferiority to Shiva that it is difficult to recite the whole of them. One must be content with a few.

The first incident relates to the view taken by Arjuna to slay Jayadratha on the following day. After the vow, Arjuna became very dejected thinking that Jayadratha's friends would do their utmost to save him and that unless he had sure weapons he would not be able to fulfil his vow. Arjuna goes to Krishna for advice. Krishna suggests to Arjuna that he should supplicate to Mahadeva for the Pasupata weapon with which Mahadev himself had formerly destroyed all the Daityas and which, if he obtained it, he would be

sure to kill Jayadrath. The Drone-Parvan which relates the story proceeds to say:

"The righteous Vasudeva (Krishna) then, together with the son of Pritha (Arjuna), reciting the eternal Veda, bowed his head to the ground, beholding him the source of the worlds, the maker of the universe, the unborn, the imperishable lord, the supreme source of mind, the sky, the wind, the abode of the luminaries, the creator of the oceans, the supreme substance of the earth, the framer of gods, Danavas, Yakshas and men, the supreme Brahma of meditative systems, the satisfied, the treasure of those who know Brahma, the creator of the world and also its destroyer, the great impersonated destructive Wrath, the original of the attributes of Indra and Surya. Krishna then revered him with voice, mind, understanding and act. Those two (heroes) had recourse to Bhava (Mahadeva) as their refuge,—to him whom the wise, desiring the subtle spiritual abode, attain,—to him the unborn cause. Arjuna, too, again and again revered that deity, knowing him to be the beginning of all beings, the source of the past, the future, and the present. Beholding those two, Nara and Narayana, arrived Sarva (Mahadeva), then greatly gratified, said, as if smiling: 'Welcome, most eminent of men, rise up freed from fatigue, and tell me quickly, heroes, what your mind desires. Shall I accomplish for you the object for which you have come? Choose what is most for your welfare. I will give you all.'" Krishna and Arjuna then recite a hymn in

honour of Mahadeva, in the course of which he is designated as the soul of all things, the creator of all things, and the pervader of all things. Arjuna now, after reverencing both Krishna and Mahadeva, asks the latter for the celestial weapon. They are thereupon sent by Mahadeva to a lake where he says he had formerly deposited his bow and arrows. They there saw two serpents, one of which was vomiting flames, and approached them, bowing to Mahadeva and uttering Satarudriya. Through the power of Mahadeva, the serpents change their shape and become a bow and arrow, which Krishna and Arjuna bring to Mahadeva. Eventually Arjuna receives as a boon from Mahadeva the Pasupata weapon, with the power of fulfilling his engagement to slay Jayadratha after which they both return to their camp." The Anusasana-Parvan of the Mahabharata contains a dialogue between Yudhishtira and Bhishma. Yudhishtira asks Bhishma to tell him the attributes of Mahadeva. This is what Bhishma says in reply:

" I am unable to declare the attributes of the wise Mahadeva, who is an all-pervading god, yet is nowhere seen, who is the creator and the lord of Brahma, Vishnu and Indra, whom the gods, from Brahma to the Pisachas, worship, who transcends material natures as well as spirit (Purusha), who is meditated upon by rishis versed in contemplation (yoga), and possessing an insight into truth, who is the supreme, imperishable Brahma, that which is both non-existent, and at once existent and non-existent. Having agitated matter and spirit by his power, this god of gods and lord of creatures (Prajapati) thence created Brahma. What human being like me, who has been subject to gestation in the womb, and to birth, and is liable to decay and death, can declare the attributes of Bhava, the supreme lord— (who can do this) except Narayana, the bearer of the shell, the discus, and the cub? This Vishnu, wise, eminent, in qualities, very hard to overcome, with divine insight, of mighty power, beholds (him) with the eye of contemplation. Through his devotion to Rudra, the world is pervaded by the mighty Krishna. Having then propitiated that deity (Mahadeva) at Badari, he (Krishna) obtained from the golden-eyed Mahesvara the quality of being in all worlds more dear than wealth. This Madhava (Krishna) performed austerity for a full thousand years, propitiating Siva, the god who bestows boons, and the preceptor of the world. But in every mundane period (yuga) Mahesvara has been propitiated by Krishna and has been gratified by the eminent devotion Of that great personage. This unshaken Hari (Krishna) when seeking, for offspring, has beheld distinctly of what character is the glory of that great parent of the world. Than him I behold none higher. This large-armed (Krishna) is able to recount fully the names of the god of gods, to describe the qualities of the divine (being) and the real might of Mahesvara in all its extent".



This dialogue between Yudhishtira and Bhishma took place in the presence of Krishna. For immediately after his reply Bhishma calls upon Krishna to celebrate the greatness of Mahadeva. And this supreme Clod Krishna proceeds to do so without feeling any offence and says:

"The course of the deeds of. Isa (Mahadeva) cannot he really known. He whose essence neither the gods headed by Hiranyagarhha. nor the great rishis with Indra, nor the Adityas. the perceivers of the minutest objects, understand,—how can he. the refuge of saints he known by any mere man? I shall declare to you exactly some of the attributes of that divine slayer of the Asuras of the lord of religious ceremonies."

Here not only do we find that Krishna acknowledges his inferiority to Shiva but we also find Shiva conscious of the fact that Krishna has been beaten down and is no longer his superior, indeed is not even his equal. This is evident from Sauptika-parvan where Mahadeva says to Asvathaman \*:

" I have been duly worshipped by Krishna, the energetic in action. with truth, purity, honesty, liberality, austerity, ceremonies. patience, wisdom, self-control, understanding and words: Wherefore no one is dearer to me than Krishna ". Krishna from being above Shiva, above every God. indeed a Parmeshwar is reduced to the position of being a mere follower of Shiva begging for petty boons.

This does not complete the story of the degradation of Krishna. He is made to undergo further humiliation. Krishna not only accepted a position of inferiority vis-a-vis Shiva but he is sunk so low that he became a disciple of Upamanyu who was a great devotee of Shiva and took Diksha from him in Shaivism. Krishna himself says:

"On the 8th day I was Initiated by that Brahamana (Upamanyu) according to the Shastras. Having shaved my entire head. anointing myself with ghee, and taking the staff and kusa grass in my arms I dressed myself in bark fastened with the mekhala (the waist string)." Krishna then performs penance and has a sight, of Mahadeo. Can there be a more glaring instance of so great a rise and so much of a fall in the status of a God? Krishna who was a Parmeshwar as compared to Shiva who was only an Ishwar does not even remain an Ishwar. He actually becomes a devotee of Shiva and seeks initiation in the Shaiva Shastras from a common Brahmin like Upamanyu.

The case of Rama as a God is much more artificial than that of Krishna. Rama himself was unaware of the fact that he was a God. After recovering Sita on the defeat and death of Ravana, Sita was suspected of unchastity, Rama felt very dejected on hearing the words of those who thus spoke about Sita. The Ramayana says:

"Then King Kuvera, and Yama with the Pitris and Indra. Lord of the gods,

and Varuna, lord of the waters, and the glorious three-eyed Mahadeva, whose ensign is a bull, and Bramha, the creator of the whole world, the most eminent of the knowers of the Veda: (and that King Dasaratha, moving in the air on a celestial car, arrived in that region, equal in lustre to the king of the gods); these all having come on cars brilliant as the Sun, and arrived in the city of Lanka, came near to Raghava (Rama). Then these most eminent gods, holding the large arms of Rama, adorned with armlets, addressed him as he stood with joined hands: How dost thou, the maker of the whole Universe, the most eminent of the wise, the pervading, disregard Sita's throwing herself into the fire? How dost thou not perceive thyself to be the chief of the host of the gods ? (Thou wast) formerly the Vasu Ritadhman, and the Prajapati of the Vasus. Thou art the primal maker of the three worlds, the self dependent lord, the eighth Rudra of the Rudras, and the fifth of the Sadhyas. The Asvins are thine ears, the Moon and Sun thine eyes."

"Thou, vexer of thy foes, art seen in the end and at the beginning of created beings. And yet thou disregarded Sita like a common man ".

On being thus addressed by these Gods, Rama became surprized and replied:

"I regard myself as a man, Rama, son of Dasharath; do you, divine being tell me who and whence I am ". On this, Brahma replying to Rama said:

"Hear my true word, O being of genuine power. Thou art the god, the glorious lord, Narayana, armed with the discus. Thou art the one-horned boar, the conqueror of thy foes, past and future, the true, imperishable Brahma, both in the middle and end. Thou art the supreme righteousness of the worlds, Vishvaksena, the four-armed ; the bearer of the bow, Saranga, Hrishikesa (lord of the senses). Purusha (the male), the highest of Purushas, the unconquered, sword-wielding, Vishnu, and Krishna of mighty force, the general, the leader the true. Thou art intelligence, thou art patience, and self-restraint. Thou art the source of being and cause of destruction, Upendra (the younger Indra), the Madhusudana. Thou art Mahendra (the elder Indra) fulfilling the function of Indra, he from whose navel springs a lotus, the ender of battles. The great divine rishis call thee the refuge, the resort of suppliants. Thou art the hundred-horned, composed of the Veda, the thousand-headed the mighty. Thou art the primal maker of the three worlds, the self-dependent lord, and the refuge of the Siddhas and Sahyas, O thou primevally born. Thou art sacrifice, thou art the vashatkara, and the omkara, higher than the highest. Men know not who thou art, the source of being, or the destroyer. Thou art seen in all creatures, in Brahmans and in cows, in all the regions, in the mountains and rivers, thousand-footed, glorious, hundred-headed, thousand-eyed. Thou sustainest creatures, and the earth with its mountains; thou art

seen Rama. at the extremity of the earth, in the waters, a mighty serpent supporting the three worlds, gods, Gandharvas, and Danavas. I am thy heart, Rama, the goddess Sarasvati is thy tongue. The gods have been made by Brahma the hairs on thy limbs. The night is called the closing, and the day the opening, of thine eyes. The Vedas are thy thoughts. This (universe) exists not without thee. The whole world is thy body; the earth is thy stability. Agni is thine anger, Soma is thy pleasure, O thou whose mark is the Srivatsa. By thee the three worlds were traversed of yore with thy three paces. and Mahendra was made king after thou hadst bound the terrible Bali. That which is known as the chiefest light, that which is known as the chiefest darkness, that which is the higher than the highest-thou art called the highest Soul. It is thou who art hymned as that which is called the highest, and is the highest. Men call thee the highest source of continuance, production and destruction." Obviously, there is the same degree of artificiality in the cult of Rama. Like Krishna he was a man who was made God. Unlike Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh, he was not one who was born God. It is probably to make his Godhood perfect that the theory was invented that he was the incarnation of Vishnu and that Sita his wife was the incarnation of Lakshmi the wife of Vishnu.

In another respect, Rama was fortunate. He did not have to suffer degradation to other Gods as did Brahma, Vishnu and Krishna. There was however an attempt to degrade him below Parasurama the hero of the Brahmins. The story is told in the Ramayana which says:

"When King Dasaratha was returning to his capital, after taking leave of Janaka. the King of Mithila, whose daughter Sita had just been married to Rama he was alarmed by the ill-omened sounds by certain birds, which however were counteracted, as the sage Vasishta assured the king by the auspicious sign of his being perambulated by the wild animals of the forest. The alarming event indicated was the arrival of Parasurama, preceded by hurricane which shook the earth and prostrated the trees, and bythick darkness which veiled the Sun. He was fearful to behold, "brilliant as fire, and bore his axe and a bow on his shoulder. Being received with honour, which he accepted, he proceeded to say to Rama, the son of Dasaratha that he has heard of his prowess in breaking the bow produced by Janak and had brought another which he asked Rama to bend, and to fit an arrow on the string; and if he succeeded in doing so, he (Parasurama) would offer to engage with him in single combat."

" Rama replied that though his warlike qualities are condemned by his rival, he will give him a proof of his powers. He. then snatches, in anger, the bow from the hand of Parasurama, bends it, fits an arrow on the string; and tells

his challenger that he will not shoot at him because he is a Brahman, and for the sake of his kinsman Visvamitra; but will either destroy his superhuman capacity of movement, or deprive him of the blessed abodes he has acquired by austerity. The gods now arrive to be witnesses of the scene. Parasurama becomes disheartened and powerless and humbly entreats that he may not be deprived of his faculty of movement lest he should be incapacitated from fulfilling his promise to Kasyappa ' to leave the earth every night but consents that his blissful abodes may be destroyed."

With this exception Rama had no rivalry with any of the other Gods. He managed to be where he was. With regards to other Gods there is a different story to tell. Poor creatures they became nothing more than mere toys in the hands of the Brahmins. Why did the Brahmins treat the Gods with so scant a respect?

RIDDLE NO. 12  
WHY DID THE BRAHMINS DETHRONE THE GODS AND ENTHRONE  
THE GODDESSES?

The worship of Gods is a thing common to all. But the worship of Goddesses is quite uncommon. The reason is that Gods are generally unmarried and have no wives who can be elevated to the position of Goddesses. How repugnant is the idea of a God being married is well illustrated by the difficulties which early Christians had in persuading the Jews to accept Jesus as the son of God. The Jews retorted saying God is not married and how can Jesus be the son of God.

With the Hindus the position is quite otherwise. They not only worship Gods they also worship Goddesses. This is so from the very beginning.

In the Rig-Veda several Goddesses are mentioned such as *Prithvi, Aditi, Diti, Nishtigri, Indrani, Prisni, Usha, Surya, Agnaya, Varunani, Rodasi, Raka, Sinivali, Sradha, Aramati, Apsaras and Sarasvati.*

Prithvi is a very ancient Aryan Goddess. She is represented either as wife of *Dyaus* heaven or of *Parjanya*. Prithvi is an important Goddess because she is said to be the mother of many Gods.

Aditi is chronologically one of the older Vedic Goddesses. She is described as the mighty mother of the Gods. The Gods, *Mitra, Aryaman* and *Varuna* are her sons. To whom Aditi was married does not appear from the Rig-Veda. We do not know much about *Diti* except that she is mentioned as a goddess along with and in contrast to *Aditi* and that the *Daityas* who were regarded in later Indian mythology as the enemies of the Devas were her sons.

***The original title of the Chapter was ' Vedic and non- Vedic Goddesses***

**' From the subject dealt with in this chapter and from the concluding para, we have placed this at Riddle No. 12 in accordance with the subject mentioned in the Table of Contents. This is a 21-page typed copy having some modifications and also concluding para in the handwriting of the author.—Ed.**

The goddess *Nishtigri* is the mother of Indra and the goddess *Indrani* is the wife of Indra. *Prisni* is the mother of Maruts. *Usha* is described as the daughter of the sky, the sister of *Bhaga* and the kinswoman of *Varuna* and the wife of *Surya*. The goddess *Surya* is the daughter of *Surya* and the wife of the Gods *Asvins* or *Soma*.

The goddesses *Agnayi*, *Varunani* and *Rodasi* are the wives of *Agni*, *Varuna* and *Rudra* respectively. Of the rest of the goddesses are mere personifications of rivers or are mentioned without any details.

From this survey two things are clear. One is that a Hindu God can enter a married state and neither the God nor his worshipper need feel any embarrassment on account of the God acting as though he was no better than a common man. The second is that the God's wife automatically becomes a goddess worthy of worship by the followers of the God.

Leaving the Vedic times and coming to the Pauranic times we come across the names of various Goddesses such as *Devi*, *Uma*, *Sati*, *Ambika*, *Parvati*, *Haimavati*, *Gauri*, *Kali*, *Nirriti*, *Chandi* and *Katyayini*, *Durga*, *Dassbhuj*, *Singhavahini*, *Mahishasuramardini*, *Jagaddhatri*, *Muktakesi*, *Tara*, *Chinnamustaka*, *Jagadgauri*, *Pratyangira*, *Annapurna*, *Ganeshjanani*, *Krishnakrora* and *Lakshmi*. It is very difficult to construct a who is who of these Goddesses. In the first place it is difficult to say whether each name stands for a distinct and separate Goddess or they are the names of one Goddess. It is equally difficult to be sure of their parentage. Nor can any one say with certainty as to who their husbands are.

According to one account *Vma*, *Devi*, *Sati*, *Parvati*, *Gauri* and *Ambika* are different names of the same Goddess. On the other hand *Devi* is said by some to be the daughter of *Daksha*, *Ambika* to be the sister of *Rudra*. Regarding *Parvati* the *Varaha Purana* in describing her. origin says:

"Brahma when on a visit to Siva on Mount Kailasa is thus addressed by him: " Say, quickly, O, Brahma, what has induced you to come to me?' Brahma replies, 'There is a mighty Asura named *Andhaka* (Darkness), by whom all the gods, having been distressed, came for protection, and I have hastened to inform you of their complaints'. Brahma then looked intently at Siva, who bythought summoned Vishnu into their presence. As the three deities looked at each other, 'from their three refulgent glances sprang into being a virgin of

celestial loveliness, of hue cerulean, like the petals of a blue lotus, and adorned with gems, who hashfully bowed before Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. On their asking her who she was, and why she was distinguished by the three colours black, white and red, she said, ' From your glances was I produced: do you not know your own omnipotent energies?' Brahma then praising her said, 'Thou shalt be named the goddess of three times (past, present and future), the preserver of the universe, and under various appellations shalt thou be worshipped, as thou shalt be the cause of accomplishing the desires of thy votaries. But, O goddess, divide thyself into three forms, according to the colours by which thou art distinguished. She then, as Brahma had requested, divided herself into three parts: one white, one red, and one black. The white was ' Saraswati of a lovely, felicitous form, and the co-operator with Brahma in creation: the red was Lakshmi, the beloved of Vishnu, who with him preserves the universe; the black was Parvati endowed with many qualities and energy of Siva. "

Here is an attempt to suggest that *Saraswati*, *Lakshmi* and *Parvati* are different forms of one and the same divinity. When one remembers that *Saraswati* is the wife of Brahma, Lakshmi is the wife of Vishnu and Parvati is the wife of Shiva, and also that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva were at war, this explanation given by the Varah Puran seems very odd.

Who is Gauri? The Purana says that Gauri is another name for Parvati. The reason how Parvati was called Gauri is that when Shiva and Parvati lived on mount Kailasa, occasionally there were quarrels between them, and on one occasion Shiva reproached her for the blackness of her skin. This taunt so grieved her that she left him for a time. and, repairing to a deep forest, performed a most severe course of austerities, until Brahma granted her as a boon that her complexion should be golden and for this circumstance she is known as Gauri.

Taking the other Goddesses it is not quite certain whether they are different names for one and the same Goddess or whether they are different Goddesses. In the Mahabharata there is a hymn sung by Arjuna to Durga in which he says:

"Reverence be to thee, Siddha-Senani (general-less of the Siddhas), the noble, the dweller on Mandara, Kumari (Princess), Kali, Kapali, Kapila, Krishna-pingala. Reverence to thee, Bhadrakali; reverence to thee, Maha Kali, Chandi, Chanda, Tarini (deliveress), Varavarini (beautiful-coloured). O fortunate Kalyani, O Karali, O Vijaya, O Jaya (victory) younger sister of the chief of cowherds (Krishna), delighting always in Mahisha's blood'. O Uma, Sakambhari, thou white one, thou black one, O destroyer of Kaithabha! Of science, thou art the science of Brahma (or of the Vedas), the great sleep of

embodied beings. O mother of Skanda (Kartikeya), divine Durga, dweller in wildernesses'. Thou, great goddess, art praised with a pure heart. By thy favour let me ever be victorious in battle."

From this hymn it does appear that some of the Goddesses listed above are simply different names of Durga. Similarly, Dasabhuja, Singhavahini, Mahishamardini, Jagaddhatri, Chinnamustaka, Jagadgauri, Pratyangiri, Annapurna are the same as Durga or different forms of *Durga*.

There are thus two principal Goddesses. One is *Parvati* and the other is *Durga*. The rest are mere names. Parvati is the daughter of Daksha Prajapati and the wife of Shiva and Durga is the sister of Krishna and the wife of Shiva. The relationship of *Durga* and *Kali* is not quite clear. According to the hymn sung by Arjuna, Durga and Kali would appear to be one and the same. But the Linga Purana seems to suggest a different view. According to it. Kali is distinct from Durga.

A comparison between the Vedic Goddesses and the Puranic Goddesses cannot be avoided by a student whose business it is not merely to write history but to interpret history. On one point there is a striking contrast, between the two. The worship of the Vedic Goddesses was worship by *courtesy*. They were worshipped only because they were the wives of Gods. The worship of the Puranic Goddesses stand on a different footing. They claim worship in their own right and not because they are wives of Gods. This difference arises because the Vedic Goddesses never went to the battle-field and never performed any heroic deed. The Puranic Goddesses on the other hand went to the battlefield and performed great heroic deeds. Their worship was not by courtesy. It was based upon their heroic and thundering deeds.

There was a great battle, it is said, between Durga and the two *asuras* which brought renown to Durga. The story is told in the Markandeya Purana in full details. It says\*:

At the close of the Treta Age, two giants, named Sumbha and Nishumbha performed religious austerities for 10,000 years, the merit of which brought Shiva from heaven, who discovered that by this extraordinary devotion, they sought to obtain the blessing of immortality. He reasoned long with them, and vainly endeavoured to persuade them to ask for any other gift. Being denied what they specially wanted, they entered upon still more severe austerities for another thousand years, when Shiva again appeared, but still refused to grant what they asked. They now suspended themselves with their heads downwards over a slow fire, till the blood streamed from their necks; they continued thus for 800 years. The Gods began to tremble, lest, by performing such rigid act of holiness, these demons should supplant them on their thrones. The king of the Gods thereupon called a council, and imparted to

them his fears. They admitted that there was ground for anxiety, but asked what was the remedy.

Acting upon the advice of Indra, Kandarpa (the God of love), with Rambha and Tilotama, the most beautiful of the celestial nymphs, were sent to fill the minds of the giants with sensual desires. Kandarpa with his arrow wounded both; upon which, awaking from their absorption, and seeing two beautiful women, they were taken in the snare, and abandoned their devotions. With these women they lived for 5000 years; after which they saw the folly of renouncing their hopes of immortality for the sake of sensual gratifications. They suspected this snare must have been a contrivance of Indra; so, driving back the nymphs to heaven, they renewed their devotions, cutting the flesh off their bones, and making burnt offerings of it to Shiva. They continued in this way for 1000 years till at last they became mere skeletons; Shiva again appeared and bestowed upon them his blessing—that in riches and strength they should excel the Gods.

Being exalted above the Gods, they began to make war upon them. After various successes on both sides, the giants became everywhere victorious; when Indra and the Gods, reduced to a most deplorable state of wretchedness, solicited the interference of Brahma and Vishnu. They referred them to Shiva, who declared that he could do nothing for them. When, however, they reminded him that it was through his blessing they had been ruined, he advised them to perform religious austerities to Durga. They did so: and after some time the goddess; appeared, and gave them her blessing; then disguising herself as a common female carrying a pitcher of water, she passed through the assembly of the gods. She, then assumed her proper form, and said, 'They are celebrating my praise '.

'This new goddess now ascended Mount Himalaya where Chanda and Manda, two of Sumbha and Nisumbha's messengers resided. As these demons wandered over the mountain, they saw the goddess; and being exceedingly struck with her charms, which they described to their masters, advised them to engage her affections, even if they gave her all the glorious things which they had obtained in plundering the heavens of the gods.

Sumbha sent Sugriva as messenger to the goddess, to inform her that the riches of the three worlds were in his palace; that all the offerings which used to be presented to the gods were now offered to him; and that all these offerings, riches, etc., would be hers, if she would come to him. The goddess replied that the offer was very liberal, but that she had resolved that the person she married must first conquer her in war, and destroy her pride. Sugriva, unwilling, to return unsuccessful, pressed for a favourable answer, promising that he would conquer her in war, and subdue her pride; and asked



in an authoritative strain; ' Did she know his master, before whom none of the inhabitants of the worlds had been able to stand, whether gods, demons, or men? How then could she, a female think of resisting his offers ? If his master had ordered him, he would have compelled her to go into his presence immediately. She agreed that this was very correct, but that she had taken her resolution, and exhorted him, therefore to persuade his master to come and try his strength with her.

The messenger went and related what he had heard. On hearing his account, Sumbha was filled with rage, and, without making any reply, called for Dhumlochana his commander-in-chief and gave him orders to go to Himalaya and seize the goddess and bring her to him. and, if any attempted a rescue, utterly to destroy them.

The commander went to Himalaya, and acquainted the goddess with his master's orders. She, smiling, invited him to execute them. On the approach of this hero, she set up a dreadful roar, by which he was reduced to ashes. After which she destroyed the army of the giant leaving only a few fugitives to communicate the tidings. Sumbha and Nisumbha, infuriated, sent Chanda and Manda, who on ascending the mountain, perceived a female sitting on an ass, laughing. On seeing them she became enraged, and drew to her ten, twenty, or thirty of their army at a time, devouring them like fruit. She next seized Manda by the hair, cut off his head and holding it over her mouth, drank the blood. Chanda, on seeing the other commander slain in this manner, himself came to close quarters with the goddess. But she, mounted on a lion, sprang on him, and, despatching him as she had done Manda, devoured part of his army, and drank the blood of the slain.

The giants no sooner heard this alarming news than they resolved to go themselves, and collecting their forces, an infinite number of giants, marched to Himalaya. The gods looked down with astonishment on this vast army, and the goddesses descended to help Maharnaya (Durga), who, however, soon destroyed her foes, Raktavija, the principal commander under Sumbha and Nishumbha, seeing all his men destroyed encountered the goddess in person. But though she covered him with wounds, from every drop of blood which fell to the ground a thousand giants, arose equal in strength to Raktavija himself. Hence innumerable enemies surrounded Durga, and the gods were filled with alarm at the amazing sight. At length Chandi, a goddess, who had assisted Kali (Durga) in the engagement, promised that if she would drink the giant's blood before it fell to the ground, she (Chandi) would engage him and destroy the whole of his strangely formed offspring. Kali consented, and the commander and his army were soon despatched.

Sumbha and Nishumbha, in a state of desperation, next engaged the

goddess in single combat, Sumbha making the first onset. The battle was inconceivably dreadful on both sides, till at last both the giants were slain, and Kali sat down to feed on the carnage she had made. The gods and the goddesses chanted the praises of the celestial heroine, who in return bestowed a blessing on each." The Markandeya Purana also gives a short account of the valorous deeds of Durga done in the various forms it took. It says:

" As Durga she received the message of the giants; As Dasabhuja (the ten-armed) she slew part of their army; As Singhavahini (seated on a lion) she fought with Raktavija; As Mahishamardini (destroyer of a buffalo) she slew Sumbha in the form of a buffalo; As Jagadhatri (the mother of the world) she overcame the army of the giants; As Kali (the black woman) she slew Raktavija; As Muktakesi (with flowing hair) she overcame another of the armies of the giants; As Tara (the saviour) she slew Sumbha in his own proper shape; As Chinnamastaka (the headless) she killed Nisumbha; As Jagadgauri (the golden-coloured lady renowned through the world) she received the praises and thanks of the gods." A comparison between the Vedic and Puranic Goddesses raises some interesting questions. One of them is quite obvious. Vedic literature is full of references to wars against the Asuras. The literature known as Brahmanas replete with them. But all these wars against the Asuras are fought by the Vedic Gods. The Vedic Goddesses never took part in them. With the Puranic Goddesses the situation has undergone a complete change. In the Puranic times there are wars with the Asuras as there were in the Vedic times. The difference is that while in the Vedic times the wars with the Asuras are left to be fought by the Gods in the Puranic times they are left to be fought by the Goddess. Why is

that Puranic Goddesses had to do what the Gods in Vedic times did? It cannot be that there were no Gods in Puranic times. There were Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva gods who ruled in the Puranic times. When they were there to fight the Asuras why were the Goddesses enrolled for this purpose. This is a riddle which requires explanation.

The second question is what is the source of this power which the Puranic Goddesses possessed and which the Vedic Goddesses never had? The answer given by the Puranic writers is that this power was the power of the Gods which dwelt in the Goddesses. The general theory was that every God had energy or power which was technically called *Sakti* and that the *Sakti* of every God resided in his wife the Goddess. This had become such an accepted doctrine that every goddess is called a *Sakti* and those who worship the Goddess only are called *Saktas*.

With regard to this doctrine there are one or two questions that call for a

reply.

First is this. We may now take it that notwithstanding the many names of the Goddesses as we find in the Puranas we have really five Puranic Goddesses before us—namely, *Sarasvati*, *Lakshmi*, *Parvati*, *Durga* and *Kali*. *Sarasvati* and *Lakshmi* are the wives of Brahma and Vishnu who along with Shiva are recognized as the Puranic Gods. *Parvati*, *Durga* and *Kali* are the wives of Shiva. Now *Sarasvati* and *Lakshmi* have killed no Asura and have in fact done no deed of valour. Question is why? Brahma and Vishnu had *Sakti* which in conformity with the theory must have dwelt in their wives. Why then did *Sarasvati* and *Lakshmi* not take part in the battle with the Asuras? This part is only reserved for the wives of Shiva. Even here *Parvati*'s role is quite different from that of *Durga*. *Parvati* is represented as a simple woman. She has no heroic deeds to her credit like the ones claimed for *Durga*. Like *Durga*, *Parvati* is also the *Sakti* of Shiva. Why was Shiva's *Sakti* dwelling in *Parvati* so dull, so dormant, and so inactive as to be non-existent ?

The second point is that though this doctrine may be a good justification for starting the worship of Goddesses independently of Gods, it is difficult to accept either the logical or historical basis of the doctrine. Looking at it purely from the point of view of logic if every God has *Sakti* then even the Vedic Gods must have had it. Why then was this doctrine not applied to the wives of the Vedic Gods? Looking at it from the point of view of history, there is no justification for saying that the Puranic Gods had *Sakti* in them.

Further the Brahmins do not seem to have realized that by making *Durga* the heroine who alone was capable of destroying the Asuras,

they were making their own Gods a set of miserable cowards. It seems that the Gods could not defend themselves against the Asuras and had to beg of their wives to come to their rescue. One illustration from the Markandeya Purana is enough to prove how imbecile the Puranic Gods were shown by the Brahmins against the Asuras. Says the Markandeya Purana.:

"Mahisha, king of the giants at one time overcame the gods in war. and reduced them to such a state of want that they wandered through the earth as beggars. Indra first conducted them to Brahma, and then to Siva; but as these gods could render no assistance, they turned to Vishnu, who was so grieved at the sight of their wretchedness, that streams of glory issued from his face. whence came a female figure named Mahamaya (another name of *Durga*). Streams of glory issued from the faces of the other gods also. which in like manner entered Mahamaya: in consequence of which she became a body of glory, like a mountain of fire. The gods then handed their weapons to this dreadful being, who with a frightful scream ascended into the air, slew the giant and gave redress to the gods."

How can such cowardly Gods have any prowess? If they had none, how can they give it to their wives. To say that Goddesses must be worshipped because they have *Sakti* is not merely a riddle but an absurdity. It requires explanation why this doctrine of *Sakti* was invented. Was it to put it a new commodity on the market that the Brahmins started the worship of the Goddesses and degraded the Gods?.

## RIDDLE NO. 13

### THE RIDDLE OF THE AHIMSA

Any one who compares the habits and social practices of the latter-day Hindus with those of the Ancient Aryans he will find a tremendous change almost amounting to a social revolution.

The Aryans were a race of gamblers. Gambling was developed to science in very early days of the Aryan Civilization so much so that they had even devised certain technical terms. The Hindus used the words *Krita*, *Treta*, *Dwapara* and *Kali* as the names of the four Yugas or periods into which historical times are divided. As a matter of fact originally these are the names of the dices used by the Aryans at gambling . The luckiest dice was called *Krita* and the unluckiest was called *Kali*. *Treta* and *Dwapara* were intermediate between them. Not only was gambling well developed among the ancient Aryans but the stakes were very high. Gambling with high money stakes have been known elsewhere. But they are nothing as compared with those which are known to have been offered by the Aryans. Kingdoms and even their wives were offered by them as stakes at gambling. King *Nala* staked his kingdom and lost it. The *Pandavas* went much beyond. They not only staked their kingdom they also staked their wife *Draupadi* and lost both. Among the Aryans gambling was not the game of the rich. It was a vice of the many. So widespread was gambling among the Ancient Aryans that the burden of all the writers of the *Dharma Sutras* (*Shastras*?) was to impress upon the King the urgency of controlling it by State Authorities under stringent laws.

***The original Table of Contents shows Riddle No. 13 as ' How the Brahmins who were once cow-killers became the worshippers of the Cow?' This chapter is not found in the papers. However, few pages entitled 'Riddle of Ahimsa' have been found. The Riddle has been placed here as it seems to deal with the same topic. This chapter consisting of 10 typed pages is obviously incomplete as the remaining text is***

**missing. Ed.**

The relation of the sexes among the Aryans were of a loose sort. There was a time when they did not know marriage as a permanent tie between a man and a woman. This is evident from the Mahabharata where Kunti the wife of Pandu refers to this in her reply to Pandu's exhortation to go to produce children from some one else. There was a time when the Aryans did not observe the rule of prohibited degrees in their sex relations. There are cases among them of brother cohabiting with sister, son with mother, father with daughter and grand-father with grand-daughter. There was a communism in women. It was a simple communism where many men shared a woman and no one had a private property in or exclusive right over a woman. In such a communism the woman was called *Ganika*, belonging to many. There was also a regulated form of communism in women among the Aryans. In this the woman was shared among a group of men but the day of each was fixed and the woman was called *Warangana* one whose days are fixed. Prostitution flourished and has taken the worst form. Nowhere else have prostitutes consented to submit to sexual intercourse in public. But the practice existed among the Ancient Aryans. Bestiality also prevailed among the Ancient Aryans and among those who were guilty of it are to be reckoned some of the most reverend Rishis.

The Ancient Aryans were also a race of drunkards. Wine formed a most essential part of their religion. The Vedic Gods drank wine. The divine wine was called Soma. Since the Gods of the Aryans drank wine the Aryans had no scruples in the matter of drinking. Indeed to drink it was a part of an Aryan's religious duty. There were so many Soma sacrifices among the Ancient Aryans that there were hardly any days when Soma was not drunk. Soma was restricted to only the three upper classes, namely the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishas. That does not mean the Shudras were abstainers. Who were denied Soma drank Sura which was ordinary, unconsecrated wine sold in the market. Not only the male Aryans were addicted to drinking but the females also indulged in drinking. The Kaushitaki Grihya Sutra I. 11-12 advises that four or eight women who are not widowed after having been regaled with wine and food should be called to dance for four times on the night previous to the wedding ceremony. This habit of drinking intoxicating liquor was not confined to the Non-Brahmin women. Even Brahmin women were addicted to it. That drinking was not regarded as a sin; it was not even a vice, it was quite a respectable practice. The Rig-Veda says: "Worshipping the sun before drinking madira (wine)".

The Yajur-Veda says:

"Oh, Deva Soma! being strengthened and invigorated by Sura (wine), by thy

pure spirit, please the Devas; give juicy food to the sacrificer and vigour to Brahmanas and Kshatriyas." The Mantra Brahmana says:

"By which women have been made enjoyable by men, and by which water has been transformed into wine (for the enjoyment of men), " etc. That Rama and Sita both drank wine is admitted by the Ramayana. Uttar Khand says:

"Like Indra in the case (of his wife) Shachi, Ramachandra saw that Sita drank purified honey called wine. Servants brought for Ramachandra meat and sweet fruit

So did Krishna and Arjuna. The Udyoga Parva of the Mahabharata says:

"Arjuna and Shrikrishna drinking wine made from honey and being sweet-scented and garlanded, wearing splendid clothes and ornaments, sat on a golden throne studded with various jewels. I saw Shrikrishna's feet on Arjuna's lap, and Arjuna's feet on Draupadi and Satyabhama's lap."

The greatest change that has taken place is in the diet. The present day Hindus are very particular about their diet. There are twofold limitations on commensality. A Hindu will not eat food cooked by a Non-Hindu. A Hindu will not eat food cooked even by a Hindu unless he is a Brahmin or a man of his caste. The Hindu is not only particular on the question of whose food he should eat, he is also particular to what he should eat. From the point of view of diet Hindus may be divided into two main classes.

(1) Those who are vegetarians.

(2) Those who are non-vegetarians. The non-vegetarians again fall into several sub-divisions: Those who will eat all kinds of flesh and fish. Those who will eat only fish.

Those who will eat flesh are sub-divided into following categories:

(i) Those who will eat the flesh of any animal except the cow.

(ii) Those who will eat the flesh of any animal including that of the cow.

(iii) Those who will eat flesh but not of a cow (whether dead or slaughtered) nor of chicken.

Classifying the Hindu Population from the point of view of its diet the Brahmins are divided into two classes (1) Pancha Gauda and (2) Panch Dravida.

Of these Panch Dravida are completely vegetarian. The Panch Gauda's with the exception of one section namely Gauda Saraswatas are also completely vegetarian. The Untouchables who are at the other end of the Hindu Society are non-vegetarian. They eat meat, not merely of goats and fowls but also of the cow irrespective whether it is dead or slaughtered. The Non-Brahmins who are midway between the Brahmins and the Untouchables have different ways. Some like the Brahmins are Vegetarians. The rest unlike

the Brahmins are non-vegetarians. All of them are alike in one thing namely that all of them are opposed to eating the cow's flesh.

There is one other aspect of the question which needs to be mentioned. It is the question of killing an animal for purposes of food. On this the Hindu mind is more or less united. No Hindu will kill an animal not even for food. Except for a small caste known as Khatiks there are no butchers among the Hindus. Even the Untouchables will not kill. He eats the flesh of a dead cow. But he will not kill a cow. In India today the butcher is a Musalman and any Hindu who wants to kill an animal for his food has to seek the services of a Musalman. Every Hindu believes in Ahimsa.

Since when did vegetarianism come into India? When did Ahimsa become an established belief? There are Hindus who do not understand the propriety of this question. They hold that vegetarianism and Ahimsa are not new things in India.

The evidence in support of the contention that the ancient Aryans the ancestors of present-day Hindus were not only meat-eaters but beef-eaters is really overwhelming. As evidences in support of this view it is enough to draw attention to the following facts: They are quite indisputable. Take the case of Madhuparka.

Among the ancient Aryans there was well established procedure of reception to be given to a guest which is known as Madhuparka the detailed descriptions regarding which will be found in the various Grihya Sutras. According to most of the Grihya Sutras there are six persons who deserve Madhuparka. Namely (1) Ritvij or the Brahmin called to perform a sacrifice, (2) Acharya, the teacher, (3) the Bridegroom, (4) The King, (5) The Snatak, the student who has just finished his studies at the Gurukul and (6) Any person who is dear to the host. Some add Atithi to this list. Except in the case of the Ritvij, King and Acharya, Madhuparka is to be offered to the rest once in a year. To the Ritvij, King and Acharya it is to be offered each time they come. The procedure consisted first in washing by the host the feet of his guest, then the offer of the Madhuparka and the drinking of it by the quest accompanied by certain Mantras.

What were the components of the Madhuparka ? Madhuparka literally means a ceremony in which honey is shed or poured on the hand of a person. This is what Madhuparka was in its beginning. But in course its ingredients grew and included much more than honey. At one time it included three ingredients—curds, honey, and butter. There was a time when it was made of five things, curds, honey, ghee, yava and barley. Then it came to be a mixture of nine items. The Kausika Sutra speaks of nine kinds of mixtures, viz. *Brahma* (honey and curds), *Aindra* (of *payasa*), *Saumya* (curds and

ghee), *Mausala* (saine and ghee, this being used only in *Sautramani* and *Rajasuya* sacrifices), *Varuna* (water and ghee), *Sravana* (sesame oil and ghee), *Parivrajaka* (sesame oil and oil cake). Then we come to the time of the Manava Grahya Sutra which says that the Veda declares that the Madhuparka must not be without flesh and so it recommends that if the cow is let loose, goat's meat or *payasa* (rice cooked in milk) may be offered ; The *Hir* gr. i. 13.14 says that other meat should be offered : *Baud.* gr. says (1.2.51-54) that when the cow is let off, the flesh of a goat or ram may be offered or some forest flesh (of a deer & c.,) may be offered, as there can be. no Madhuparka without flesh or if one is unable to offer flesh one may cook ground grains. But in the final stage flesh became the most essential part of Madhuparka. In fact some of the Grihya Sutras go to the length of saying that there can be no Madhuparka without flesh. This they base upon an express injunction contained in the Rig-Veda (VIII. 101.5) which says " Let the Madhuparka not be without flesh ".

Flesh eating was thus quite common. From the Brahmins to the Shudras everybody ate meat. In the Dharmasutras numerous rules are given about the flesh of beasts and birds and about fishes. Gaut. 17.27-31, Ap.Dh.S. 1.5.17.35 Vas.Dh.S. 14.39-40. Yaj. 1. 177, Vishnu Dh.S. 51.6, Sankha (quoted by Apararka p. 1167), Ramayana (Kiskindha 17.39), Markendey Purana (35.2-4) prescribe that one should avoid the flesh of all live-nailed animals except of porcupine, hare, svavidh (a boar or hedgehog), iguana, rhinoceros and tortoise (some of these works omit the rhinoceros). Gautama adds that one should also avoid the flesh of all animals with two rows of teeth in the two jaws, of hairy animals, of hairless animals (like snakes), of village cocks and hogs and of cows and bulls. Ap. Dh. S. 1.5.17. 29-31 first forbids the flesh of animals with one hoof only, of camels, of gavaya (Gayal), of the village hog, of the sarabha and of cows, but adds the exception that the flesh of milch cows and of bulls may be eaten as the Vajasaneyaka declares the flesh of these to be pure. Ap. Dh. S. (11.2.5.15) forbids the use of flesh to a teacher of the Veda in the (INCOMPLETE. FURTHER TEXT MISSING)

## RIDDLE NO. 14

### FROM AHIMSA BACK TO HIMSA

"From Himsa to Ahimsa" is only a part of the story of Ahimsa. There is another part of the story which can only be described, under the heading " From Ahimsa back to Hirnsa ". The second part of the story will be clear if



only one were to note the religious practices of the Tantras and Tantraism to which a reference has already been made.

The essentials of Tantrik worship are the five Makars. These five Makars consists of:

1. The drinking of wine and liquors of various kinds . . . (Madya);
2. The eating of meat ..... (Mansa);
3. The eating of fish ..... (Matsya);
4. The eating of parched or fried grain ..... (Mudra);
5. The sexual union ..... (Maithuna). It is unnecessary to say at

this stage anything about Maithuna or Sexual intercourse having been made an element of religious worship. It is sufficient to take note of Madya and Mansa.

With regard to the first four of these acts the Tantras prescribe twelve sorts of liquors, three sorts of wine, and three sorts of meat. Pulastya, one of the ancient sages who is the supposed author of certain law-books, also enumerates twelve kinds of liquors, as follows: "

1. Liquor extracted from the bread fruit (panasa), called Jack-liquor;
2. From grapes (draksha);
3. From date-palm (kharjuri);
4. From common palm (tali), or toddy;
5. From coconut (narikela);
6. From sugarcane (ikshu);
7. From Madhavika plant;

***The chapter seems to be a continuation of the previous chapter on ' Ahimsa '. There are six typed pages with few corrections and having the title written by the author himself.—Ed.***

8. Long-pepper liquor (saira);
9. Soap-berry liquor (arishta);
10. Honey-liquor (madhuka);
11. A kind of rum or liquor prepared from molasses, etc. (called Gaudi, or sometimes Maireya);
12. Arrack, or liquor prepared from rice and other grain (sura or Varuni, or paishti).

Besides the above twelve kinds of spirituous drink others are frequently mentioned, for example, *Tanka*, made from wood-apple, *Koli*, made from the *jujbe*; and *Kadambari*; the last being the favourite beverage of Bala-Rama.

The meat may be that of birds, beasts, or fish. The parched grain is eaten, like dry biscuit, as a relish with the wine and spirituous liquors. The drinking of each kind of drink is supposed to be attended with its own peculiar merit and advantage. Thus one liquor gives salvation, another learning, another power,

another wealth, another destroys enemies, another cures diseases, another removes sin, another purifies the soul."

The Tantrik worship had gone deep into Bengal. Referring to his own experience Rajendra Lal Mitra says:

" I knew a highly respectable widow lady, connected with one of the most distinguished families in Calcutta, who belonged to the Kaula sect, and had survived the 75th birthday, who never said her prayers (and she did so regularly every morning and evening) without touching the point of her tongue with a tooth-pick dipped in a phial of arrack, and sprinkling a few drops of the liquor on the flowers which she offered to her god. I doubt very much if she had ever drunk a wine-glassful of arrack at once in all her life, and certain it is that she never had any idea of the pleasures of drinking: but, as a faithful Kaula, she felt herself in duty-bound to observe the mandates of her religion with the greatest scrupulousness. That thousands of others do so, I have every reason to believe. In some parts of Bengal, where arrack is not easily accessible, such female votaries prepare a substitute by dropping the milk of a coconut in a bell-metal pot, or milk in a copper vessel, and drink a few drops of the same. Men are, however, not so abstemious, and the Tantras ordain a daily allowance of five cupsful, the cup being so made as to contain five tolas, or two ounces, i.e. they are permitted to take ten ounces or about a pint of arrack daily". This Tantrik worship was not confined to the small corner of Bengal. As is pointed out by Mahamahopadhyaya Jadaveshwara Tarkaratna:

"Just as the Bengalis of the higher castes are divided into Shaktas, Vaishnavas, and Shaivas. so it is with the peoples of Kamarupa, Mithila, Utkala, and Kalinga, and the Kashmirian pandits. The Shakti Mantra, Shiva Mantra. and Vishnu Mantra. are each Tantrik. Amongst Dakshinatyas, Mahamahopadhyaya Subramanya Shastri, and many others, are Shaktas. The late Mahamahopadhyaya Rama Mishra Shastri. Bhagavatacharya. and many others, were and are Vaishnavas. Mahamahopadhyaya Shivakumara Shastri, and a number of others are Shaivas. In Vrindavana there are many Shaktas as well as Vaishnava Brahmanas. though amongst the higher castes in Maharashtra and other Southern Indian countries. Shaivas and Vaishnavas are more numerous than Shaktas. Followers of the Pashupata and Jangama cults are Shaivas whereas those of Madhavacharya and Ramanujacharya are Vaishnavas. Many in the North-West are initiated in the Rama-Mantra. which is to be found only in the Tantra. It is still more remarkable that. according to this author, the pandas of Shri Purushottama are all Shaktas, and the priests of Kamakhya Devi are all Vaishnavas."

Although it is not possible to give the exact date when the Tantras and Tantra worship came into existence there is no doubt that their date is after

Manu. This fact makes the rise of the Tantra worship a matter of great surprize. The Tantras not only lifted the prohibition enacted by Manu against wine and flesh but they made drinking and flesh eating articles of faith.

The surprising thing is the part that the Brahmins have played in furthering the Tantra and Tantra worship. The Tantras had no respect for the Vedas. The Tantrikas said that the Vedas were like a common woman open to all but that the Tantra was like a high-born woman kept secluded. The Tantra was never repudiated by the Brahmins. On the other hand they recognized it as a fifth Veda. So orthodox a Brahmin as Kulluka-Bhatt the celebrated Commentator on Manu Smriti says that Shruti is of two kinds, Vaidik and Tantrik. Not only did the Brahmins not repudiate the Tantras but actually promoted the Tantrik worship. The Matrika Bheda Tantra makes Shiva address his wife Parvati as follows\*:

"O sweet speaking goddess, the salvation of Brahmanas depends on drinking wine. I impart to you a great truth, O mountain born, when I say that the Brahman who devotes himself to drinking and its accompaniments, forthwith becomes a Siva. Even as water mixes with water, and metal blends with metal ; even as the confined space in a pitcher merges into the great body of the confining vessel, and air mingles with air, so does a Brahman melt into Brahma, the universal soul ".

"There is not the least doubt about this. Likeness to the divinity and other forms of beatitude are designed for Kshatriyas and others; but true knowledge can never be acquired without drinking spirituuous liquor; therefore should Brahmanas always drink. No one becomes a Brahman by repeating the Gayatri, the mother of the Vedas: he is called a Brahman only when he has knowledge of Brahma. The ambrosia of the gods is their Brahma, and on earth it is arrack (or liquor distilled from rice); and because one attains through it the condition of a god (suratva), therefore is that liquor called sura."

Why did the Brahmins repudiate father Manu and start again drinking liquor and flesh eating which Manu had stopped? This is a riddle.

## **RIDDLE NO. 15**

### **HOW DID THE BRAHMINS WED AN AHIMSAK GOD TO A BLOODTHIRSTY GODDESS?**

Having started drinking and flesh eating the Brahmins did not hesitate to write puranas advocating animal sacrifices. One such Purana requires a special mention. It is called the Kali Purana. This Purana is written with the

express purpose of propagating the worship of the goddess Kali. In this Purana there is an adhhyaya called Rudhir Adhhyaya which means the bloody chapter.

I give below a summary of the Rudhir Adhhyaya. In this chapter\* the God Shiva addresses his three sons Betal, Bhairawar, and Bhairava in the following terms:

"I will relate you, my sons, the ceremonies and rules to be observed in sacrifices which being duly attended to are productive of the divine favour.

"The forms laid down in the Vaishnavi Tantra, are to be followed on all occasions and may be observed by sacrifices to all Deities."

" Birds, tortoise, allegators, fish, nine species of wild animals, buffaloes, bulls, he-goats, inchneumons, wild boars, rhinoceroses, antelopes, guanans, reindeer, lions, tigers, men and blood drawn from the offerer's own body, are looked upon as proper oblations to the Goddess Chandica, the Bhairavas &c."

" It is through sacrifices that princes obtain bliss, heaven, and victory over their enemies."

"The pleasure which the Goddess receives from an oblation of the fish and tortoises is of one month's duration, and three from that of a crocodile. By the blood of the nine species of wild animals the Goddess is satisfied nine months, and for that space of time

***This is a 16-page typed MS having modifications by the author himself. All the pages are numbered serially and the treatment of the subject seems complete.—Ed.***

continues propitious to the offerer's welfare. The blood of the wild bull and Guana give pleasure for one year, and that of the antelope and wild boar for twelve years. The Sarabhas blood satisfies the Goddess for twenty-five years, and buffalo's and rhinoceros's blood for a hundred, and that of the tiger an equal number. That of the lion, reindeer, and the human species produces pleasure, which lasts a thousand years. The flesh of these, severally, gives the pleasure for the same duration of time as their blood. Now attend to the different fruits attending an offering of the flesh of a rhinoceros or antelope, as also of the fish called Rohita."

"The flesh of the antelope and rhinoceros pleases the Goddess five hundred years and the Rohita fish and *Bardhrinasa* give my beloved (i.e. the Goddess Cali) delight for three hundred years."

"A spotless goat, who drinks only twice in twenty-four hours, whose limbs are slender, and who is the prime among a herd, is called *Bardhrinasa*, and is reckoned as the best of Havyas (i.e. offerings to the Deities) and Cavyas,

(i.e. offerings to the deceased progenitors)."

" The bird whose throat is blue and head red and legs black with white feathers, is called also *Barshrinasa*, and is king of the birds, and the favourite of me and Vishnu."

"By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, Devi is pleased one thousand years and by sacrifice of three men, one hundred thousand years. By human flesh, Camachya, Chandica, and Bhairava who assumes my shape, are pleased one thousand years. An oblation of blood which has been rendered pure by holy texts, is equal to ambrosia; the head also afford much delight to the Goddess Chandica. Let therefore the learned when paying adoration to the Goddess, offer blood and the head, and when performing the sacrifices to fire, make oblations of flesh."

" Let the performer of the sacrifice be cautious never to offer bad flesh, as the head and blood are looked upon by themselves equal to ambrosia."

"The gourd, sugar cane, spirituous liquors, and fermented liquors are looked upon as equivalent to other offerings, and please the Goddess for the same duration of time as the sacrifice of a goat." "The performance of the sacrifice, with a Chandrahasa, or Gatri, (two weapons of the king) is reckoned the best mode, and with a hetcher or knife, or a sangeul, the second best, and the beheadings with a hoe a Bhallac (an instrument of the spade kind) the inferior mode."

"Exclusive of these weapons no others of the spear of arrow kind ought ever to be used in performing a sacrifice, as the offering is not accepted by the Goddess, and the giver of it dies. He who, with his hands, tears off the head of the consecrated animal. or bird, shall be considered equally guilty with him who has slain a Brahman, and shall undergo great sufferings.

" Let not the learned use the axe, before they have invoked it by holy texts, which have been mentioned heretofore, and framed by the learned for the occasion; let those I now tell you, be joined to them and the axe invoked, and particularly so, where the sacrifice is to be made to the Goddesses Durga and Camachya."

" Let the sacrificer repeat the word Kali twice, then the words ' *Devi Bajreswari, the Lawha Dandayai, Namah !* ' which words may be rendered ' *Hail! Cali, Cali! Hail! Devi! goddess of thunder, Hail Iron sceptered Goddess !* ' Let him then take the axe in his hand, and again invoke the flame by the Calratriya text as follows:

" Let the sacrificer say: ' *Hrang Hring. Cali, Cali.* ' O horrid toothed Goddess: eat, cut, destroy all the malignant, cut with this axe, bind; seize, seize: drink blood; *spheng* secure, secure. Salutations to Cali." Thus ends the Calratriya Mantra."

"The Charge (the axe) being invoked by this text called the Calratriya Mantra, Calratri (the Goddess of darkness) herself presides over the axe uplifted for the destruction of the sacrificer's enemies."

"The sacrificers must make use of all the texts directed previous to the sacrifice, and also of the following, addressing himself to the victim."

" Beasts were created by the self existing, himself to be immolated at sacrifices. I therefore immolate thee, without incurring any sin in depriving thee of life."

" Let the sacrificer then name the Deity to whom the sacrifice is made, and the purpose for which it is performed; and by the above text immolate the victim, whose face is to be towards the north, or else let the sacrificer turn his own face to the north, and the victim's to the east: Having immolated the victim, let him without fail mix salt &c., as before mentioned with the blood."

"The vessel in which the blood is to be presented, is to be according to the circumstances of the offerer, of gold, silver, copper, brass, or leaves sewed together, or of earth, or of *tutenague*, or of any of the species of wood used in sacrifices."

" Let it not be presented in an iron vessel, nor in one made of the hide of an animal, or the bark of tree; nor in a pewter, tin, or leaden vessel. Let not the blood be represented in the holy vessel named Srub and Sruch, nor on the ground. Let it not be presented in the Ghata (i.e. an earthen-jar always used in other religious ceremonies). Let it not be presented by pouring it on the ground, or into any of the vessels used at other times for offering food to the Deity, Let not the good man who wishes for prosperity, offer the blood in any of these vessels. Human blood must always be presented in a metallic or earthen vessel; and never on any account in a vessel made of leaves, or similar substance.

"The offering of a horse, except at the Aswamedha sacrifice, is wrong, as also offering an elephant, except at the Gaja Medha; Let therefore the ruler of men observe never to offer them except on those occasions. And on no account whatsoever let him offer them to the Goddess Devi, using the wild bull called Chanrara as a substitute for the horse, when the occasion required one."

" Let not the Brahman ever offer a lion or a tiger, or his own blood, or spirituous liquors to the Goddess Devi. If a Brahmen sacrifices either a lion, a tiger, or a man, he goes to hell, and passes but a short time in this world attended with misery and misfortune."

" If a Brahman offers his own blood, his guilt is equal to that of the slayers of a Brahman; and if he offers spirituous liquors he is no longer a Brahman."

" Let not a Cshectree offer an entelope; if he does, he incurs the guilt of a

Brahmin slayer where the sacrifice of lions, or tigers, or of the human species is required, let the three first classes act thus; having formed the image of the lion, tiger, or human shape with butter, paste, or barley meal, let them sacrifice the same as if a living victim, the axe being first invoked by the text Nomo, &c.

" Where the sacrifice of a number of animals is to take place it is sufficient to bring and present two or three to the Deity, which serves as a consecration of the whole. I have now related to you, O Bhairava, in general terms, the ceremonies and forms of sacrifices attend now to the different texts to be used on the several different occasions."

" When a buffalo is presented to Devi, Bhairavee, or Bhairava let the sacrificer use the following Mantra in invoking the victim." " In the manner that thou destroyest. Horses, in the manner that thou carriest Chandica, destroy my enemies, and bear prosperity to me, O Buffalo!"

"O steed of death, of exquisite and unperishable form, produce me long life and fame. Salutation to thee, o buffalo! "

"Now attend to the particulars relative to the offering of human blood."

"Let a human victim be sacrificed at a place of holy worship, or at a cemetery where dead bodies are buried. Let the oblation be performed in the part of the cemetery called Heruca, which has been already described, or at a temple of Camachya, or on a mountain. Now attend to the mode."

"The cemetery represents me, and is called Bhairava, it has also a part called Tantarange; the cemetery must be divided into these two division, and a third called Heruca."

"The human victim is to be immolated in the east division which is sacred to Bhairava, the head is to be presented in the south division, which is looked upon as the place sculls sacred to Bhairavi, and the blood is to be presented in the west division, which is denominated Heruca."

" Having immolated a human victim, with all the requisite ceremonies at a cemetery or holy place, let the sacrificer be cautious not to cast eyes upon the victim."

" On other occasion also, let not the sacrificer, cast eyes upon the victim immolated, but present the head with eyes averted."

"The victim must be a person of good appearance, and be prepared by ablutions, and requisite ceremonies, such as eating consecrated food the day before, and by abstinence from flesh and venery: and must be adorned with chaplets of flowers and besmeared with sandal wood. "

"Then causing the victim to face the north, let the sacrificer worship the several deities presiding over the different parts of the victims body: let the worship be then paid to the victim himself by his name."

" Thus let the sacrificer worship the victim, adding whatever other texts are applicable to the occasion, and have been before mentioned.

"Let not the female, whether quadruped or bird, or a woman be ever sacrificed; the sacrificer of either will indubitably fall into hell, where the victim of either the beasts or birds creation, are very numerous, the immolation of a female is excusable; but this rule does not hold good, as to the human species."

" Let not a Brahman or a Chandala be sacrificed; nor a prince; nor that which has already been presented to a Brahmen, or a deity; nor the offspring of a prince, nor who has conquered in battle; nor the offspring of a Brahman, or of a Cshettree; nor a childless brother, nor a father, nor a learned person, nor one who is unwilling, nor the maternal uncle of the sacrificer. Those not here named, and animals, and birds of unknown species are unfit. If these named are not forth coming, let their place be supplied by a male ass or camel. If other animals are forth coming, the sacrifice of a tiger, camel, or ass must be avoided."

" Having first worshipped the victim, whether human, beast, or bird, as directed, let the sacrificer, immolate him uttering the Mantra directed for the occasion, and address the deity with the text laid down before."

" Let the head and blood of a human victim be presented on the right side of Devi, and the sacrificer address her standing in front. Let the head and blood of birds be presented on the left and the blood of a person's own body in front. Let the ambrosia proceeding from the heads of carnivorous animals and birds be presented on the left hand. as also the blood of all aquatic animals."

" Let the antelope's head and blood, and that of the tortoise, rhinoceros and hare and crocodile, and fish be presented in front." " Let a lion's head and blood, be presented on the right hand, and the rhinoceros's also: let not, on any account, the head or blood of a victim ever be presented behind the Deity, but on the right, left and in front."

" Let the consecrated lamp, be placed either on the right hand, or in front but on no account, on the left. Let incense be burnt on the left, and in front, but not on the right hand. Let perfumes, flowers and ornaments, be presented in front; with respect to the different parts of the circle, where to present the offerings, the mode already laid down may be observed. Let Madira (spirituous liquor) be presented behind other liquids on the left."

"Where it is absolutely necessary to offer spirits, let the three first classes of men supply their place, by coconut juice in a brass vessel, or honey in a copper one. Even in a time of calamity, let not a man of the three first classes, offer spirituous liquor, except that made from flowers, or stewed



dishes. Let princes, ministers of state, counsellors, and vendors of spirituous liquors, make human sacrifices, for the purpose of attaining prosperity and wealth."

" If a human sacrifice is performed, without the consent of the prince, the performer incurs sin. In cases of imminent danger or war, sacrifices may be performed at pleasure, by princes themselves and their ministers, but by none else."

" The day previous to a human sacrifice, let the victim be prepared by the text Manastac, and three Devi Gandha Suchtas, and the texts Wadrang; and by touching his head with the axe, and besmearing the axe with sandal &c., perfumes, and then taking some of the sandal, &c., from off the axe, and besmearing the victim's neck therewith."

"Then let the text Ambe Ambica, &c., and the Towdra and Bhairava texts be used, and Devi herself will guard the victim who, when thus purified, malady does not approach him, nor does his mind suffer any derangement from grief and similar causes, nor does the death or birth of a kinsman render him impure."

\* \* \* \* \*

" Having secured the victim with cords, and also with (Mantras) let him strike off the head, and present it to Devi, with due care. Let him make these sacrifices in proportion to the increase or decrease of his enemies, chopping off the heads of victims for the purpose of bringing destruction on his foes, infusing, by holy texts, the soul of the enemy into the body of the victim, which will when immolated, deprive the foe of life also."

"The blood must be drawn for the express purpose of an oblation, and from a man pure in body and mind, and free from fear; it must be caught in the petal of lotus and presented. It may be presented in a gold, silver, brass or iron vessel, with the due form, the texts recited."

"The blood, if drawn by incision made with a knife, axe or sangeul, gives pleasure, in proportion to the size of the weapon."

"The sacrificer may present one fourth of the quantity which a lotus petal will contain, but he must not give more on any account; nor cut his body more than is necessary. He who willingly offers the blood of his body and his own flesh, the size of a grain of linseed, Masha, tila, or mudya, with zeal and fervency, obtains what he desires in the course of six months."

He who performs sacrifices according to these rules, obtains, his wishes to the utmost extent."

\* \* \* \* \*

This is the Dharma which the Kali Purana preaches. After centuries of

Ahimsa ordained by Manu here is Himsa in full blast sanctioned by the Tantras in its worst and all inclusive form— animal and human Himsa. These Himsa practices preached in the sanguinary chapter of Kali Purana had become quite widespread. As to the revival of animal sacrifice what happens at the Kali Temple in Calcutta furnishes unmistakable proof. That this temple should have become a perfect slaughter house where daily hundreds of goats are sacrificed to appease the Goddess Kali can only be explained by the teachings of the Kali Purana. Today human beings are not sacrificed to the Goddess Kali. But it does not mean that it never happened. On the contrary there is abundant evidence to show that human sacrifice like animal sacrifice was practised as taught by the Kali Purana. Dr. Rajendralal Mitra says:

" The fact is well known that for a long time the rite (of Human Sacrifice) was common all over Hindustan; and persons are not wanting who suspect that there are still nooks and corners in India, where human victims are occasionally slaughtered for the gratification of the Devi. In old families which belong to the sect of the Vamacharis, and whose ancestors formerly offered human victims at the Durga and the Kali Pujas, a practice still obtains of sacrificing an effigy, in lieu of a living man. The effigy, a foot long, is made of dried milk (khira), and sacrificed according to the formula laid down in the Kalika Purana the only addition being a few mantras designed typically to vivify the image. A friend of mine, Babu Hemachandra Ker, Deputy Magistrate of twenty four Pergunnahs and author of an excellent work on the culture of Jute in Bengal informs me that in the eastern districts of Bengal this sacrifice is frequently performed; but the image instead of being slaughtered by a single individual, is cut up simultaneously by all the grown up members of the family, either with separate knives, or with a single knife held jointly by all. This is known by the name of Satrubali or " sacrifice of any enemy ". The sacrifice, both in the case of Nara Bali and the Satru Bali is performed secretly, generally at midnight. The Satrubali, however, is a distinct rite, apart from the Narabali of the Kalika Purana, and authority for it occurs in the *Vrihannila Tantra*, in which it is said, after performing certain other rites therein described, "a king should sacrifice his enemy (in an effigy) made with dried milk (khira). He should slaughter it himself, looking at it with a fiery glance, striking deep, and dividing it into two with a single stroke. This should be done after infusing life into it by the rite of Prana Pratishtha, and repeating the name of the person to be destroyed. O consort of Mahesa, he doubtless destroys thereby his enemies."

Now the important point to note in this connection is that Kali is the wife of Shiva. The question that arises is does Shiva accept animal sacrifice ? The answer to this question is that at one time Shiva did live on animal sacrifice.

This statement may come as a surprise to the present day worshippers of Shiva. But it is a fact and those who need any evidence in support of it, have only to refer to the Ashvalayan Grihya-Sutra which gives a most elaborate description of a bull-sacrifice for the appeasement of Shiva. I give below the actual text from the Ashavalayan Grihya Sutra. This is what it says:

1. Now the spit-ox (sacrificed to Rudra).
2. In autumn or in spring, under the (Nakshatra) Ardra.
3. The vest of his herd.
4. (An ox) which is neither leprous nor speckled.
5. One with black spots, according to some.
6. If he likes, a black one, if its colour incline to copper-colour.
7. He sprinkles it with water, into which he has thrown rice and barley.
8. From head to tail.
9. With (the formula), "Grow up, agreeable to Rudra the great god'.
10. He should let it grow up. When it has cut its teeth, or when it has become a bull.
11. To a quarter (of the horizon) which is sacrificially pure.
12. At a place which cannot be seen from the village.
13. After midnight.
14. According to some, after sunrise.
15. Having caused a Brahman who is versed in learning and knows the practice (of this sacrifice), to sit down, having driven a fresh branch with leaves into the ground as a sacrificial post, (having taken) two creeping plants or two kusa ropes as two girdles, and having wound the one round the sacrificial post, and tied the other round the middle of the animal's head, he binds it to the sacrificial post or to the girdle (which he had tied to that post) with (the formula), ' Agreeable to him to whom adoration (is brought), I bind thee '.
16. The sprinkling with water and what follows is the same as at the animal sacrifice.
17. We shall state what is different.
18. Let him sacrifice the omentum with the Patri or with a leaf-thus it is understood (in the Sruti).
19. With (the formula), ' To Hara, Mrida, Sarva, Siva, Bhava, Mahadcva, Ugra, Bhima, Pasu-pati, Rudra, Sankara, Isanasvaha'!
20. Or with the last six (parts of that formula).
21. Or with (the formula). 'To Rudra svaha'!
22. Let him make Bali offerings towards the four quarters (of the horizon, to each on four rings of Kusa net-work, with the formulas),

"The hosts, Rudra, which thou hast towards the eastern direction, to them this (offering is brought). Adoration to thee! Do no harm to me ! ' In this way the assigning (of the offerings is performed) according to the different quarters (of the horizon).

23. With the following four hymns he should worship the four quarters, viz., 'what shall we do Rudra,' 'These prayers to Rudra,' 'To thee, O father, "These songs to Rudra with the strong bow. '(Rig-Veda 1, 43, 1 14; II,;33; VII, 46).
24. (This) worship to the quarters (of the horizon (is performed) at all sacrifices to Rudra.
25. The husks and chaff (of the rice), the tail, the skin, the head, the feet (of the sacrificial animal) he should throw into the fire.
26. He should turn the skin to some use according to Samvatya.
27. To the north of the fire, on rows of Darbha grass, or on rings of Kusa network, he should pour out the blood (of the sacrificial animal) with (the formula) 'Hissing ones! Noisy ones! Searching ones ! Seizing ones ! Serpents ! What here belongs to you, take that.'
28. Then, turning to the north (he assigns it) to the serpents (in the words) 'Hissing ones! What here belongs to you take that'.  
Then the serpents take whatever has flowed down there of blood or of the contents of Stomach and entrails.
29. All names, all hosts, all exaltations belong to him—to a sacrificer who knows that, he gives joy.
30. Even to a man who only with words sets forth (some part) of that (ceremony), he will do no harm: thus it is understood (in the Sruti).
31. He should not partake of that (sacrifice).
32. They should not take anything belonging to it into the village. For this God will do harm to (human) creatures.
33. He should keep away his people from the vicinity (of the place where he has sacrificed).
34. On an express injunction, however, he should partake (of that sacrificial food) for it will bring luck.
35. This split-ox sacrifice procures wealth, (open) space, purity, sons, cattle, long life, splendour. 36. After he has sacrificed, he should let loose another (animal).
37. He should not be without such an animal.
38. Then he will not be without cattle—thus it is understood (in the Sruti).
39. Muttering the Santatiya hymn, he should go to his house.

40. If disease befalls his cattle, he should sacrifice to that same God in the midst of his cow-stable.
41. A mess of cooked food, which he sacrificed in its entirety.
42. Having thrown the sacrificial grass and the Agya into the fire, he should lead his cows through the smoke.
43. Murmuring the Santatiya hymn, he should go in the midst of his cattle.
44. Adoration to Saunaka ; Adoration to Saunaka! " Today Shiva does not accept animal sacrifice. This change in the form of worship of Shiva is the result of the acceptance by the principle of Ahimsa. Having changed from *hirnsa* to *Ahimsathe* Brahmans changed Shiva from a *Himsak* God to an *Ahimsak* God. The cult of Kali has come into being long after Shiva had become an Ahimsak God. Never the less Kali his wife was made an himsak Goddess. The result is that we have a cruel contrast of a bloodless god having a blood-thirsty Goddess as his wife. Isn't it a riddle? Why did the Brahmins do such a thing?

## APPENDIX